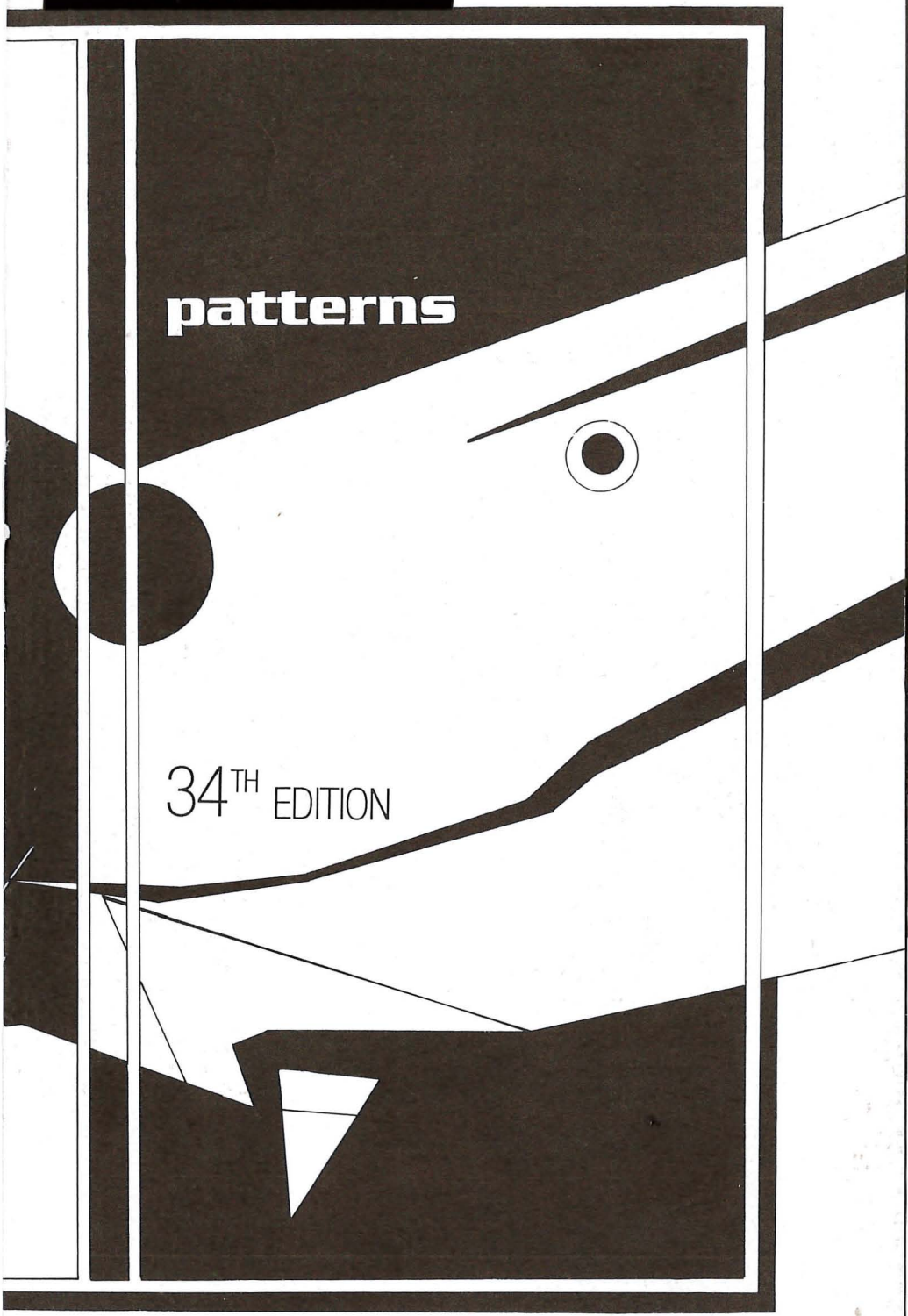
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ST. CLAIR COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
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The 34th Edition of *PATTERNS*

A Publication of
St. Clair County Community College
Port Huron, Michigan

PREFACE

Bruno Bettelheim said, "...our greatest need and most difficult achievement is to find meaning in our lives. When we expose our hearts and minds to the fruitful contemplation of life experiences --ours and those of others-- we become gifted with an invaluable measure of vision and understanding that can ultimately dazzle the imagination and stir the passions."

When we participate in the lives of others as expressed through their art, we also participate more fully in life itself because art acknowledges and voices those external questions that every human being asks ..."Who am I?", "Why am I?", "What am I to do with my life?", and "How am I to do it in the best way for me and for the others with whom I share this planet Earth?"

Literature explores the very question of existence. Literature pits truth against fancy, combining the probable elements of both, and finds, in this 34th issue of *Patterns*, voices that sometimes bellow in rage or frustration, sometimes whisper with fear or anxiety, sometimes croon with love and tenderness.

Through their unique expressions of wit, wisdom, honesty, and humor selected works of students at SCCCC are presented here in this 34th edition of *Patterns* which we hope will stir imaginations and move hearts to greater awareness and appreciation of life within and about us. Through this edition, we pay tribute to those who have the courage to confront, voice and image the ambiguities, the vagaries and the exigencies as well as the joys and exaltations of life itself.

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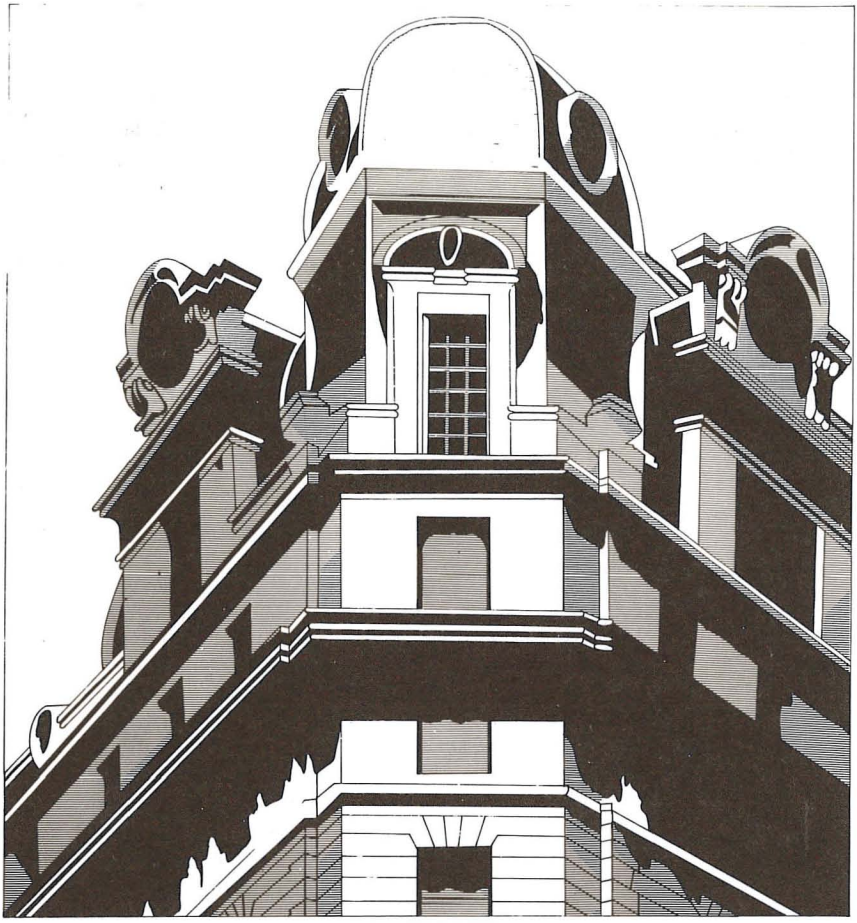
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CROWN JEWEL
Nancy Ketcham

Richard J. Colwell Memoriam

November 22, 1928-February 21, 1992

For over twenty-five years, Richard Colwell taught a variety of English courses here at St. Clair County Community College. He helped establish technical writing courses, went into area businesses and industry to teach principles of effective writing, and taught creative writing to both senior citizens and gifted high school students. In addition to being department chairman in English, he was a most supportive and enthusiastic supporter of Patterns, encouraging students to submit their work and serving as reader and judge for hundreds of entries each year.

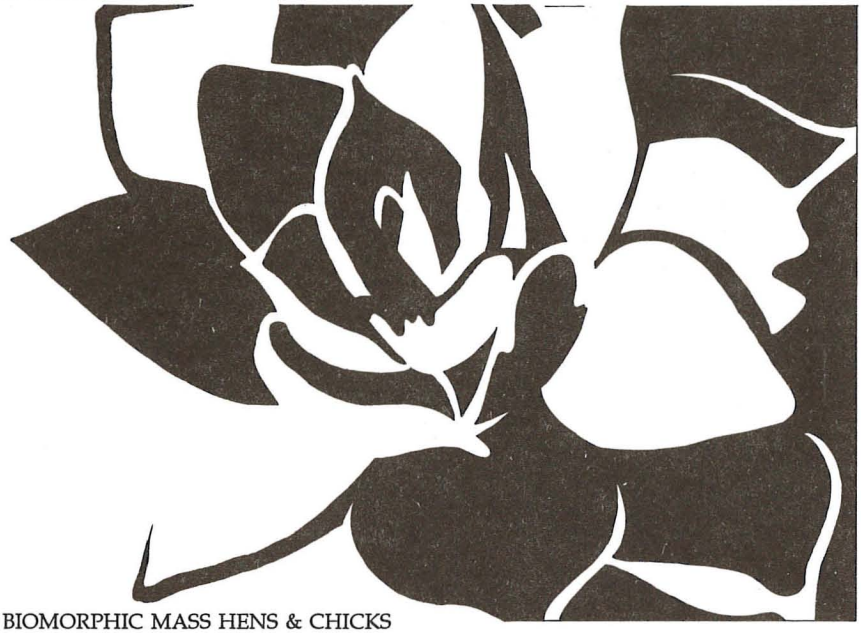
Richard was a warm and humorous human being who enriched his college and his community. He was a "character" in the best sense of the word. His unusual ties, his many shades of green on St. Patrick's Day, his generous gifts to people, and his great story-telling endeared him to so many. In the community he was a tireless worker for the rights of senior citizens and an active Lion who eventually became the State Governor of Michigan Lions. He was particularly proud of the Lions' work on behalf of the Michigan Eye Bank and Research Center in Ann Arbor, as well as the Leader Dog and Welcome Home for the Blind programs of the Lions' Club.

A teacher, a community service worker, a reader, Richard Colwell was also a family man. He spoke with great pride and love about his wife Iris, his son John, his daughter Jill and their families.

Dick Colwell loved people, poetry, and parties. He was curious about the world in which he lived, and he indeed made this world a better place because of his being part of it. We will surely miss Richard's joy and presence.



BIOMORPHICALLY LINED HENS & CHICK
Adam Warner



BIOMORPHIC MASS HENS & CHICKS
Adam Warner

The Eleanor B. Mathews Writing Award

The Eleanor B. Mathews Award was established in 1983 to recognize students whose writing submitted to the annual Patterns competition "exhibits outstanding creativity, technical skill, and individual style." Mrs. Mathews fostered her many years of teaching at the Community College and exemplified her teaching by her own writing, frequently published in a variety of magazines and journals. With this award established in her memory, she continues to encourage students to write well and to value each individual's written perceptions of life.

The judges of Patterns are pleased to present this year's award to a distinguished writer, Robert Van Putten. Robert's selection is based primarily upon his contribution to two successive issues of Patterns. In English 101, he experimented with several types of writing and submitted a personal essay from 101 about his daughter which won first place in last year's Patterns. This year his essay from English 102, a beautifully written analysis of Robert Frost's "The Silken Tent," was chosen for honorable mention. He won first prize this year in the critical essay category for his defense of a chapter of Adventures of Huckleberry Finn being placed in that book rather than in another of Twain's. Mark Twain and his editor debated this issue, and Robert succinctly defends Twain's position. In his American Literature class, Robert also wrote other essays about Twain and John Steinbeck, included for honor in this edition. Very few students have ever had all of their submissions to Patterns accepted for publication as Robert has done.

Robert's writing is characterized by both outstanding creativity and technical style. He spends hours revising and looking for the "right" word. His great love of literature is evident in his astute judgements and his ability to make connections of themes, characters, and authors' styles among various literary genres.

Robert is a highly motivated student who excels in all subjects. He currently works in the English department as an aide in the Work-Study Program, where he brings efficiency and a sense of humor. His educational goals include transferring to Wayne State University where he will pursue a degree in math or English to become a teacher. Robert's free time is spent with daughter Kristin, who lives with him, and with going to book sales. The college is proud to honor Robert Van Putten as the winner of the E.B. Mathews Award.



PERFORMER
Debra Dunkel

Aunt Pen's Last Gift

1st Place

by Sarah Faulkner

It was the scandal of three generations, the first rotten apple in living memory. No one knew why she did it, no one could understand "how she could do this to us!" But not only had she done it, she had been caught. And so Aunt Pen, ancient, tiny, giving Aunt Pen, was in disgrace so deep that she was ostracized by all her relatives. Even at family gatherings no one would speak to her; everyone pretended that the tapestry rocking chair in the corner of Aunt Margaret's living room was empty.

I was seventeen the year it happened. And it frightens me more that I care to admit that, if it hadn't happened, I might have passed from adolescence to adulthood without ever questioning the way things were. If it weren't for Aunt Pen's heinous crime, I might have grown up to be just like the rest of the family.

But it did happen. I came home from school, grabbed a handful of hot cookies and was on my way back outside when I heard scandalized tones coming from the other room. Mother only used that voice when something especially horrible, and therefore especially interesting, had happened. So I paused, leaning out of sight on the other side of the doorway, eating cookies and eavesdropping.

"How could she do this to us?" Mother was saying. "Aunt Penelope, of all people!"

Aunt Pen? Now I was really interested. I had aunts by the score, but, as far as I was concerned, Aunt Pen was the only one who counted. She was worth the lot of them. But I couldn't imagine her doing anything worthy of that note in Mother's voice.

Mother hissed a long, indrawn breath. "No! How could they print it in the paper? I'll never be able to face my friends again!"

I realized that Mother would probably never say what Aunt Pen had done. Whatever it was, it was apparently too scandalous to be put into words, and would hereafter be referred to as "It." But if it was in the paper I left my post by the door and went out to the front porch to pick up the Daily News.

Unbelievable. There was Aunt Pen's picture, right on the front page. Even in our little, inbred town, it was not every day that a person got her picture on the front page. Then I read the caption, my mouth went dry, and something hard and soggy started growing in my stomach: "Mrs. Penelope Dade, 81, caught shoplifting in Andrew's Department Store."

My eyes lost the words,

focusing instead on the picture in my mind, the picture of Aunt Pen. She was a widow; her husband had died when she was only twenty-three, leaving her childless and rich. She was not really my aunt, but my great-aunt, my mother's mother's sister. She had never remarried, but lived alone, quietly and unremarkably, in the little cottage she and her husband had come home to from their honeymoon. These things I knew, but they didn't mean much to me. The picture I carried of Aunt Pen was of a woman who knew the hopes and dreams of every member of her over-large family. She didn't talk much, didn't ask for anything. She seemed happiest when we were talking, and she would quietly listen for as long as we cared to go on. She might ask a question if our monologue slowed down, to get us going again. That was the first of her endearing traits.

The second was her endless generosity. She was always giving a gift to someone. We could count on a handsome present on Christmas and birthdays, but, in our family, we could expect that from everyone. Aunt Pen, though, gave gifts all the time. There was no pattern to her giving; she didn't give to everybody whenever she gave to anybody. She just always had something for someone. And it was always something special, something carefully picked for just that person.

Cousin Jenny's secret ambition was to be an opera singer. One day Aunt Pen stopped at her house for tea, and when she went home, she left a record and the musical score of Puccini's Madame Butterfly.

Cousin Dennis wanted to be lawyer, but his studies got harder and harder, and he became increasingly discouraged. Aunt Pen sent a package to him at school. It contained a beautiful, framed copy of the Constitution of the United States.

Aunt Eleanor, widowed for five years, wanted to open a tea parlor, but she was afraid to try, afraid of failing and losing everything she had. Aunt Pen invited her over for lunch one day. When she sat down to eat, Aunt Eleanor found on her plate a one year, paid-in-full lease agreement for a prime, downtown shop.

When I was seventeen, Cousin Jenny had just signed on with a New York opera company. Cousin Dennis had been a partner in a good law firm for three years. And Aunt Eleanor was celebrating her fortieth year in business.

And now this. Without reading the article, I put down the paper and went up to my bedroom. I crossed to the desk and ran my fingers across the flowered fabric cover of my journal. Aunt Pen had given the book to me last spring, when the first roses were fading. I didn't remember telling her my secret hopes. But every word I wrote, every story I crafted in the privacy of my room was more important after that. Somehow,

Aunt Pen knew that I wanted to be a writer. Aunt Pen had confidence that I could do it. And if Aunt Pen believed it, I knew it to be true. So I worked hard to make a writer of myself, reading books and writing, writing, filling the pages of the little diary with the children of my imagination, with exercises from writing books, with my failures and my successes.

But I had no words now. I just stood, staring out the window, feeling the soft fabric under my fingertips. Aunt Pen - shoplifting? I could still hear Mother's voice below, rising and falling in censure. But I, alone in my room, wondered in silence. The whole family was rocked by the scandal, and many hours were spent discussing it, discussing what was to be done. At seventeen, I was old enough to be present during adult conversations, provided I kept my mouth shut. And I learned just how terrible the thing was that Aunt Pen had done. Suddenly, each one of the many gifts that she had given over the years was suspect. Mother eyed her new, cut glass bud vase and her lips thinned in suspicion. Father put away his leather gardening gloves and started using the old cotton ones with holey fingertips. Even my little sister, Susan, looked guilty when she played with her tiny china tea set, and eventually shoved it away, back into a corner on her dresser.

Aunt Pen's sisters, my Great Aunts Margaret and Gertrude and my Grandmother Kane, argued with their brother Harold that this could not be ignored, someone must talk to Penelope. Mother and Father, Uncle Bill and Aunt Kelly discussed endlessly the shame Aunt Pen had brought to the family. Susan and all our cousins talked about the shame, too, the disgrace of it all, mimicking in childish voices the condemning tones of their elders.

But in the end, no one did anything. I don't think anyone ever mentioned it to her. In fact, I don't think any of them ever spoke to her again. She had been too wicked, she had shamed us all too deeply. We, the united front of her family, could never understand, could never forgive.

Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter: The family feast days came and went with Aunt Pen sitting in the corner, ignored. There were no more long talks with her; she gave no more surprises of love. And on Memorial Day, when tradition dictated that the family feast move from Aunt Margaret's gracious dining room to her gracious lawn, Aunt Pen was absent. It was a great day for the family, because they could openly talk about her, unite again in their mutual condemnation of Aunt Penelope and "It."

Shortly after Memorial Day, I once again had opportunity to eavesdrop on a conversation about Aunt Pen. This time I found out that she was sick and had been taken to a nursing home. I couldn't

believe it; Aunt Pen was never sick, ever! But before the first contraction of shock passed, I was hit by the second stunning revelation: The family lawyer had called. Aunt Pen was destitute; she could not afford to live in the nursing home for more than a few weeks.

I slipped out the back door, and within minutes I was on my way to the nursing home, unsteady on my bicycle because I was crying, and could barely see where I was going. We - the whole family! - thought Aunt Pen had brought disgrace on us. But I was the one who was shamed now, shamed to think that I had never even asked her why she did it, had never fought the killing tide of family disapproval, had let her sit alone and watch us turn our backs to her.

A pink frocked nurse, as cool as I was hot, led me to Aunt Pen's room. The nurse told me not to stay long, that the patient was not well, tired quickly. I stood silently in the doorway and looked at the familiar profile. The bright, interested eyes now drooped, dull and hopeless. The perky lips seemed too tired to lift up at the corners. Her skin was tinged with grey, her grey curls limped across her damp forehead. I almost turned away without speaking; I didn't know this pathetic old woman. But my shame made me stay, made me speak.

"Hi, Aunt Pen."

The head turned, weary eyes looked at me: Unbelief... pleasure... hope... "Nellie?"

I crossed to her, knelt, and touched her hand. "I'm sorry, Aunt Pen! Please forgive me!"

Then I was crying, burning tears that made dark spots on the cotton blanket, and her frail hands were caressing me, smoothing my hair, smudging away my tears. "Oh, Nellie, oh, Nellie," she said, over and over again.

After that, "It" didn't matter to me anymore. But I thought she ought to have a chance to explain, so I asked her. "Aunt Pen, what happened? Why did you do it?"

She made me pull a chair over, next to the bed, before she answered. Then she said quietly, "I did it for Lyle, Nellie."

"For Lyle? What do you mean?"

And then, for the first time, my Aunt Pen spoke of her long-dead husband, of the life they had together, of the tragedy of his death.

"I was on the shelf when Lyle came along, Nellie. Twenty one years old, and I'd never had a suitor. He was only nineteen, but he loved me enough to marry me. He was always full of excitement and plans. He came from money, but we didn't have much. He wanted to make his own way, so he wouldn't take help from his Pa. Lyle wanted to be a big city lawyer, and his schooling took about all we had. But I saved a little here and a little there, because when he got out of school, I wanted to be able to get a nice present for him. He was always

bringing me little things, and they meant so much! So I wanted to give him something extra special. I saved up pennies for two years, and, about six weeks before his graduation, I bought him a fine, leather briefcase, just the thing for a lawyer. I had his initials put on it, too, and it was a beauty, the first present I ever got him. I was so eager to give it to him, but I made myself wait until his graduation. I thought that
would be the perfect time."

She was silent for a moment, her breathing seemed harder, but before I could comment she went on.

"The day before his graduation, he had to go into the city to get his suit. His Pa went too - he was about as proud as I was! They took the train; it was the quickest way in those days. But on the way back, the train went off the track, and they were killed, both Lyle and his Pa. They were both dead, and I was left with nothing. Nothing except a briefcase. And, I found out later, Pa's fortune. But what's a fortune, Nellie, without someone to share it with?"

She stopped again, and I waited while she swallowed a few times, and blinked away tears. Then I asked gently, "Are you all right, Aunt Pen?"

She nodded. "I'd got that briefcase to tell him I believed in him, that I knew he could do everything he wanted to do. But I waited and waited for the right day, the perfect time to give it to him." She looked at me, and her eyes filled again. "He never got it. I waited too long."

"So after that, I never let myself wait anymore. I still had my family: Gertrude and Margaret, Harold and your grandmother. And then their children, and now you and all your cousins. With each one of you, I guess I'm still trying to make it up to Lyle, to tell him I believe in him, just like I believe in all of you."

She smoothed my hair, and when she spoke again her voice was softer, rougher. "And here's the answer to your question, Nellie, which you've been waiting for so patiently. I ran out of money. I spent that whole big fortune I got from Lyle's Pa."

"It didn't matter so much. I'm old, and don't have many needs. I guess I won't live much longer. But that day, I was in that store, and I saw... well, I saw something. I looked at it, and then I had the young man get it out of the case for me. It was just what I wanted. And I was just going to buy it when I remembered: I didn't have the money. I don't think I even thought about what I was doing. I just slid it in my purse and walked out."

She sighed, and relaxed into her pillows. "I guess you know the rest. I guess everybody does."

Yes, I thought, everybody knows the rest. But no one else knows the beginning.

The nurse peeked in then, took a quick look at Aunt Pen, and her

eyes widened. She looked at me fiercely, and jerked her head, letting me know I'd overstayed my welcome. So I went, leaving Aunt Pen with a kiss and a promise that I'd come again.

But I never went back. The next time I saw Aunt Pen, less than a week later, was at her funeral. Poor, disgraced Aunt Pen, dressed in blue, was the only one there not wan in black. She was the only one there who was at peace, who was free from the rigidity and censure of the family.

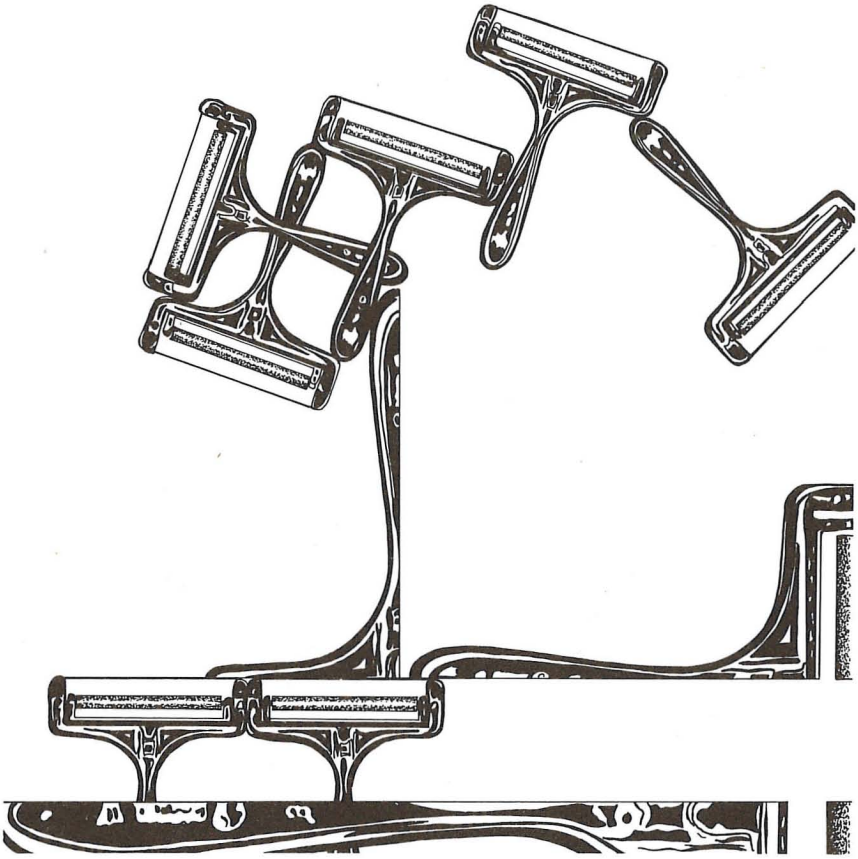
Except for me. I had found freedom in an antiseptic room in a nursing home, with a dying woman who was alive with generosity, who had poured herself out to others only to be left dry at the end. I knew better than to try to make her excuses. Some hearts hold no place for excuses, or for forgiveness.

But there was one thing I could do for Aunt Pen. I would give her last gift. I collected all my money, and went to Andrew's Department Store. I asked to see the young man who had shown the gift to her, all those months ago. Did he remember? Yes, of course. Did the store still have it? Why, yes, as a matter of fact. Would he get it for me? Certainly, miss.

He left me alone for a minute, and then handed me my Aunt Pen's last present.

Thick, creamy pages, leather as fine as silk: it was a book to write in, to fill with words, and sentences, and stories. It was a writer's book, and each blank page was a vote of confidence.

I still have that leather journal. The last several pages I left blank, as a reminder of Aunt Pen's confidence: each day is new and fresh, waiting to be filled with the realization of hopes, the fulfillment of dreams, the giving of gifts. Some people say I give too many gifts. But when they ask me why I do it, I remember Aunt Pen, and I tell them, "I do it for Lyle."

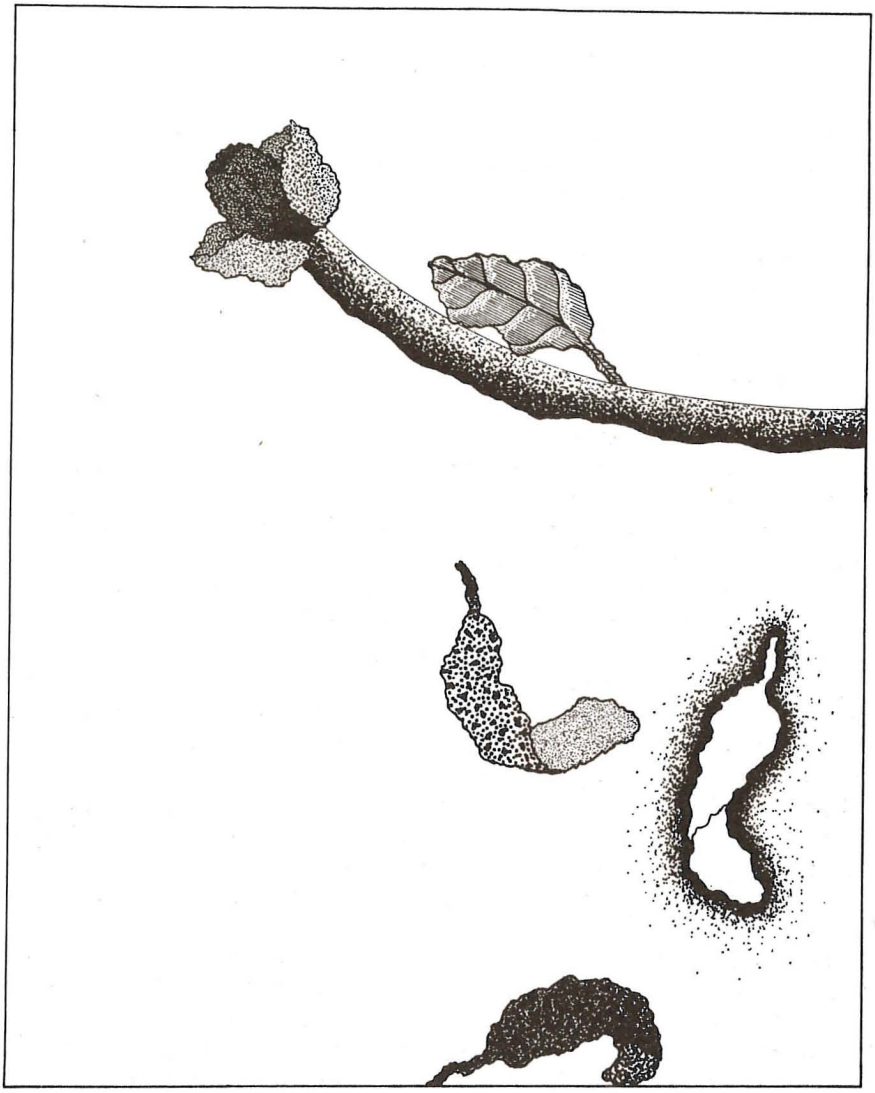


SAY CHEESE
David Wilson

Delivery

by Scott Stier

"Here's your prescription,"
I said to the elderly
woman shackled
in casts and braces.
I was unfamiliar with
her story but
restrained inquiry.
However, she was anxious
to spread the word
of her pain.
"Nine surgeries and
three more to go,"
she explained carefully,
"but I don't care
about that. I just
want him off
the road permanently.
Five years in jail and
license revoked for good--
that's all I want."
She then brought into
focus the heart of
her tears and anger:
"He was drunk. He
hit us broadside
and when he made
a run for it, hit
us again in the back...
that's when I went
through the windshield.
It was like a dream.
I heard the ambulance
driver say, 'I think
they're all done for.'
What is that supposed
to mean, 'done for'?"
This wrinkled face
began to gain
identity to me,
and although I
had to return to
the drug store,
I listened.
"My three friends were
killed...but not a
scratch on him--
that figures."
I thought of how
older people always
seem lonely and that
maybe it was more
than three friends
the drunken bastard
stole from her, maybe
it was her last three.
And that was why she
was keeping me,
for company.
"He got three lawyers,
you know. But three
lawyers can't beat
twelve surgeries
and three dead friends.
He's keeping track of me,
hoping I'll die, but
I won't. I'm strong.
I don't want any money--
no money. Not a dime.
I just want him off
the road," she kept
repeating.
Fifteen minutes
later I drove off.
I found myself
watching for
swerving cars.



FALLING
Ken Hensler

The Field of Dreams

1st Place

by John Adair

The lax summers of my youth were spent playing baseball at the school baseball diamond a short bike riding distance of three blocks from my house. Daily, we neighborhood boys would pedal our two-wheel dirt bikes down Brandywine and Monticello Lanes to the field, each carrying over one shoulder a baseball bat with a mitt at the end of the handle and in one hand ratty old baseballs with no covers while trying to steady our bikes with the other free hand. My carefree childhood days of spending time and growing up with my friends were accentuated by that shabby diamond with its sturdy deformed backstop and concrete-hard dirt. Each June, we would anticipate with measureless exuberance the last day of school at Howard D. Crull Elementary, knowing that soon we would be spending our precious time -- of course, we did not know that it was precious then -- playing the game that our heroes like Alan Trammell and Lance Parrish played professionally. As we watched wantonly through the glass from our classrooms, whose stale heat intensified our hunger to be out in the fresh air of the playground, the dusty diamond would reach out to us like the aroma of a freshly baked apple pie, sitting on a windowsill, reaches out to ravenous passersby. The field would turn our thoughts to the bats, balls, gloves, and bases that would soon replace our pencils, papers, books, and teachers. That diamond would become our meeting place, our hangout, our clubhouse, and our babysitter. To others the diamond was just a playground, but to us it was our place where we could live out our fantasies that every nine-year-old boy has of playing major league baseball. Like most children, we did not perceive ourselves as children; instead, we visualized ourselves as young major league prospects practicing for our chance to play. The field symbolized our childhood years; as we became older, it remained a constant by which we measured our growth.

Each day of summer that the weather - and our parents - allowed, we would meet at the field at the chain link fence backstop. Brian Hanton, Brian and Matt Jamison, Todd and Eric Blomquist, Bryan Chicone, Sean Gladwish, and other names that I have now forgotten, met each day. The backstop, with its lower portion of fence dented outward because of our sharp line drives and 100 m.p.h. fastballs that bombarded it each game became the base of our "club house." We would all sit on the cracked, wooden, ant-infested railroad ties that weeds and trash had begun to encompass like an ant hill overtakes a sidewalk crack. We sat impatiently with our oversized caps drooping over our wide eyes and small ears and waited for our names to be

called by either Brian Hanton or Matt Jamison (they were always the captains because they were the best players). After teams had been chosen, the players on the fielding team scurried out to their favorite positions before some other person stole theirs (my favorite position was shortstop).

Once positioned in the field, the players would throw a ball around to warm up - just like in the major leagues. As the cicadas buzzed, and the sweltering sun beat down on us, baking our young skin to a leather tan, we became drenched in sweat. Some of the more daring players chose to remove their shirts, revealing their toothpick arms and skinny chests. They would later regret taking off their shirts because dirt would cover their entire bodies and the sweat would turn that dirt into an annoying itch (it also made for excruciating scrubbing by our irritated mothers with soapy washcloths).

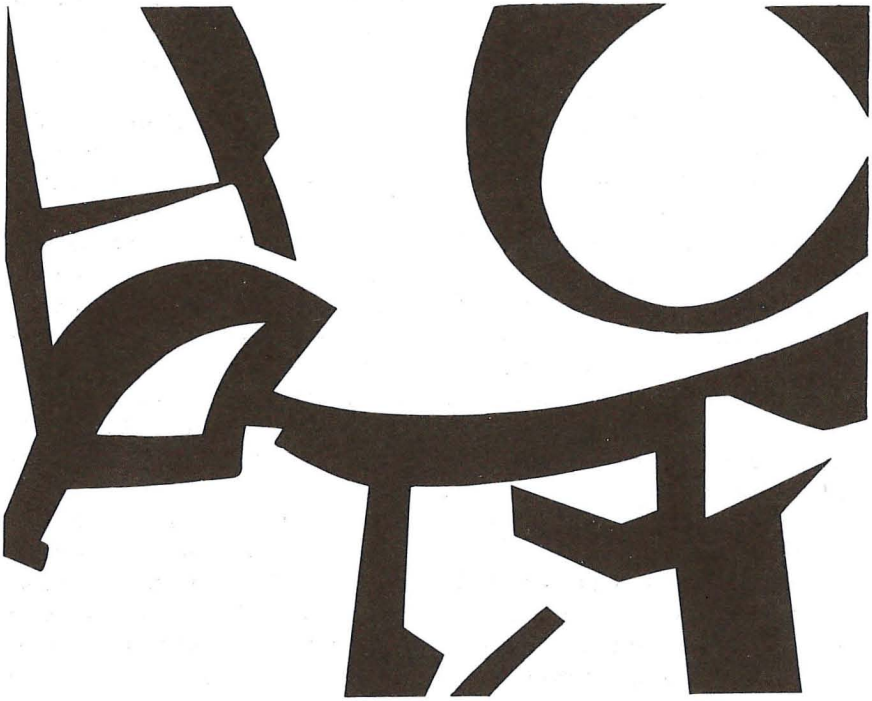
Most of our equipment could hardly be described as major league material. Most of our dilapidated mitts were hand-me-downs from our fathers and older brothers. The faded tan-colored gloves were oversized on our small hands and had pieces of leather dangling in unfamiliar places. The leather of the gloves had dried out and hardened, and many of the leather strings that held the gloves together were missing, so we had to improvise, taping the dangling parts with grey duct tape which gave our gloves a homemade, two-tone look.

The bats were also outdated; none of us had modern aluminum bats. We used cracked wooden bats that were held together with nails or glossy black electrical tape. To comfort ourselves, we pretended that the electrical tape was the sooty black, sticky pine tar that our heroes used on their bats. The original shellac finish of the bats had worn and was replaced by a collage of paint splotches and tiny gouges from being hit with jagged rocks. The balls we used were also hand-me-downs that our older brothers had torn almost to shreds with most of the red-turned-to-brown stitches gone, leaving the cover barely attached. The balls' dried out leather was laden with scuff marks and had lost its new ball smell of fresh rawhide, and at least once a week one of the players hit the cover off a ball -- literally. But we took pride in knowing that we were using balls that had once been "Official Balls of Little League Baseball."

The infield dirt was as hard as our garage floors. It did not matter that we wore cleated shoes because the ground was so hard that our "child-proof" plastic "spikes" could not penetrate the durable turf. We did not have bases; we used old shirts or scrubby carpet samples that we had found lying around garbage dumpsters, and when we did not have those items we just scratched out small squares into the dried dirt. Scattered throughout the infield were a multitude of small stones and pieces of broken glass. Though we took painstaking care trying to rid the field of the stones, there were always more pebbles the next day (we always thought that squirrels replaced all of the rocks at night). Invariably once a week, a streaking grounder would carom

off one of the rocks and hit one of the players in the groin. While the unfortunate one rolled in the dirt wincing in pain, all of the other players would roar with laughter until their sides hurt and would give each other high fives, all the while praying that it would never happen to them. We always said that we would pool our money together and create a proper field with soft Georgia red clay and lush grass -- rather than little tufts of weeds growing in the gardened cracks of the dirt. But we could never come up with enough money with our twenty-five cent per week allowances.

That baseball field and the memories of playing baseball and making lifelong friends are forever etched in my mind. I often recall those days and reflect with affectionate sentiment. Oh, to be a boy once more.



KANOMI
Gerald Lewis

Storm

by Sarah Faulkner

This sky is no whimpering baby,
whining with hunger,
quickly sated.
And this sky is no child
dropping tears to the bloodied earth,
hiccupping to a stammering smile,
soothed by Mother's kiss.

No - this sky is an outraged beauty:
the arrogant woman
 scorned,
pouring unstopped salt from her broken pride.
Her once sunny brow is darkened to black,
Her thunder is
an earshocking crack, a
pulse pushing roar, and her lightning,
should it light, will
 scorch,
and scar.

A Genuine Touchstone

1st Place

by Nancy Osborn

The clever use of language is the hallmark of Shakespeare's clowns, but the patterings of one sets him apart from his comrades; even his name indicates he is not quite the same as Shakespeare's wise fools. According to Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, a touchstone is defined as "a test or a criterion for determining the quality of genuineness of a thing; a standard." However, it must be noted that while a touchstone assists in determining the value of something precious, by itself it has little worth. In As You Like It, Shakespeare gives us a Touchstone who employs an amazing vocabulary, but his impressive phrasing is only an imitation of wise jesting. Although bright and shining, Touchstone is not a genuine wise fool.

In King Lear and Twelfth Night Shakespeare allows fools the freedom to mock their masters with witty words and hidden meanings. "Thou Shouldst not have been old till thou hadst been wise," (King Lear I.v.44-45). admonishes Lear's Fool while Feste proclaims, "Better a witty fool than a foolish wit," (Twelfth Night I.v.36). Whereas, Touchstone's clever phrases are full of double meaning meant to confuse and confound. He takes a devilish delight in perplexing a simple country fellow by announcing, "The fool doth think he is wise, but the wise man knows himself to be a fool," (V.i.31-32). This philosophy certainly appears to be sound, yet the fellow has good reason to be bewildered by it. Under Touchstone's intense interrogation, he has admitted to having "a pretty wit" (V.i.29); therefore, by Touchstone's definition, he has proclaimed himself a fool. By adroitly tossing words into fascinating patterns, Touchstone juggles the meaning of words to fit the moment.

Verbal juggling is a common preoccupation among Shakespeare's fools, but Touchstone is a master of turning sensible concepts into nonsensical ideas. While in the forest of Arden, Touchstone mutters about his notion of time.

> *It is ten o'clock/ Thus we may see, how the world wags./ 'Tis but an hour ago since it was nine,/ And after one hour more 'twill be eleven,/ And so from hour to hour, we ripe and ripe,/ And then from hour to hour, we rot and rot,/ And thereby hangs a tale. (II,vii. 22-28)*

While causing the listener to pause a moment to reflect on this thought, Touchstone's gem of logic is only an echo of what might have been a

momentous observation. In contrast are the observations of Feste who notes words are "but a cheveril glove to a good wit. How quickly the wrong side may be turned outward!" (Twelfth Night III.i.11-13) and Lear's Fool as he sings,

> *Then they for sudden joy did weep,/ And I for sorrow sung,/ That such a king should play bo-peep,/ And go the fools among. (King Lear I.iv.175-178)*

While these utterings don't appear to be profound, upon scratching the surface their meanings reveal the great depths a wise fool can impart. Touchstone's silly speeches reveal him to be a natural fool with little genuine insight.

Despite his lack of insight, Touchstone is very much in command of his words. None of Shakespeare's fools is more keenly aware of the distinct definitions of his words or has more fun with a pun. Language is Touchstone's eager friend, always at hand to do his bidding. While attempting to be polite in his description of his new life as a shepherd, his actual thoughts slip through as he drolly quips,

> *Truly shepherd, in respect of itself, it is a good life; but in respect that is a shepherd's life, it is naught. In respect that it is solitary, I like it very well; but in respect that it is private, it is a very vile life. Now in respect that it is in the fields, it pleaseth me well; but in respect it is not in the court, it is tedious. As it is a spare life (look you) it fits my humor well; but as there is no more plenty in it, it goes much against my stomach. (III.ii.13-22)*

However, just a few moments later his make full use of his linguistic ability as he disdainfully chides a shepherd companion with mystifying logic.

> *Why, if thou never wast at court, thou never saw'st good manners; if thou never saw'st good manners, then thy manners must be wicked, and wickedness is a sin, and sin in damnation. Thou art in a parlous state, shepherd. (III.ii.40-44)*

His dexterous use of multiple meanings allow outrageous thoughts to be taken seriously for the moment and then dismissed for the foolish ideas they really are.

Even so, Touchstone obviously enjoys playing the part of a fool. "By my troth, we that have good wits have much to answer for; we shall be flouting;

we cannot hold,"(V.i.11-12). Perhaps that's because Touchstone is not alone in the enjoyment of his position as fool. Early in the play Rosalind compliments him by admitting "Thou speakest wiser than thou art ware of," (II.iv.57) while Jaques delightedly reports to Duke Senior that Touchstone "hath strange places cramm'd/ With observation, the which he vents/ In mangled forms," (II.vii.40-42). Later the Duke observes Touchstone in action and comments, "By my faith, he is very swift and sententious," (V.iv.62-63), and Jaques heaps on more praise by adding, "Is not this a rare fellow, my lord? He's as good at anything, and yet a fool," (V.iv.104-105).

Without doubt, Touchstone is Shakespeare's most humorous fool. He effortlessly entertains and delights those around him with a delicate blend of language which contains a large dose of nonsense and a smattering of truth. But this very combination is what makes him different from Shakespeare's wise fools. While delightful to behold, he is merely a touchstone, not the genuine article.



SPRING CLEANING
Karen Graham

The Chestnut Wars

1st Place

Ben Chartier

Back when I was a young lad in Marine City, there were many tests to prove one's manhood. Among these were Kamikaze bike crashes, death-defying tree climbs, and the most prestigious of them all - the chestnut wars. The chestnut wars tested endurance, strength, and the raw ability to succeed in adverse conditions. A chestnut warrior must possess many qualities. He must have the agility of a cheetah, the strength of a lion, and the cunningness of a fox. These wars were not always pretty, so for those who have a weak stomach, I suggest that you read no further.

I meander down the street on a brisk autumn day. As I look up, I notice the fruitful chestnut tree looming in the horizon. At the bottom of the tree lies an endless supply of weapons. I begin to reap my harvest, collecting only choice chestnuts, which will suit my purpose. Each chestnut must be solid with a vast number of spikes protruding from its green outer shell. After filling my knapsack, I return home. I don my gloves and heavy clothing, hop on my bike, and head to the forested lot behind Lester's Party Store. This shall be the battleground, where men are made, and egos are crushed. The stage is set, war is inevitable.

On the way to the battle field, I meet up with my comrades Dustin Mackey, Kevin Wilmoth, and our exalted leader, Robby LaParl. Each of us is deadly in our own right, and as a team, we are unsurpassed. After discussing our strategy, we proceed on to the battlefield. Upon arrival, we camouflage our bikes, and disperse immediately, knowing that our foes had already taken their battle positions. We attack in our T-formation: Robby at point, Dustin and Kevin flanking wide, and me circling around and attacking from the rear. Making my way quickly through the woods, I soon find myself at the center of their fortress. I reach into my pouch, carefully take out a chestnut, and cautiously step into the clearing. I scan for the enemy, but they are nowhere to be found. "They chickened out," I thought to myself. Then, like a bolt of lightning, a bear-like paw swept across my head, hurling me to the ground. I heard a demonic laugh, and rolled over to identify my attacker. It was Don Gardner, the fattest and strongest kid in Marine City. I tried to scream, but fear struck the words from my mouth. Looking toward his feet, I noticed that I had dropped my sack of chestnuts. Luckily, I still had one in my hand. I knew that this throw would have to be perfectly

aimed. I cocked my arm, and like David I hurled my chestnut at Goliath. Then, I heard a gut wrenching scream. I looked and saw my chestnut buried in Don's forehead. Knowing that he would only be stunned for a second, I ran for my bike, and pedaled home as quickly as possible. I walked confidently through the kitchen door, and told my mom of my heroic deeds, upon which I was sent to my room, and grounded for a week. I was told to think of what I could have done to him.

Looking back at that day, I realize that I was not in the wrong, because what I did was done in self-defense. I could have just sat back and got pummeled by Don like the many, and I mean many times before, but I didn't. For the first time I fought back, and successfully defended myself. At that moment, an enormous sense of pride rushed through my body, and I realized that I was truly a chestnut warrior.

Kelcey

by Penny Strauss

The vase came
crashing
to the floor
And the child was born.

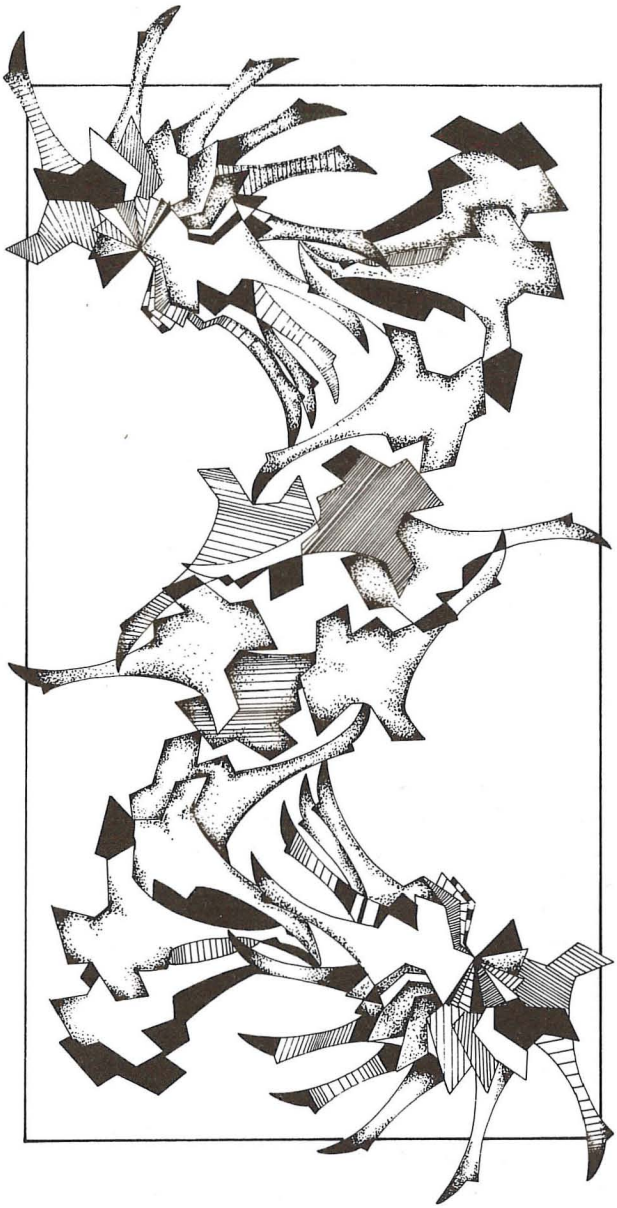
I thought it could
never
be repaired
And I heard her first cry.

I cut my finger
bleeding
on the jagged edge
She touched me with newborn angel skin.

I began slowly painstakingly
to glue the pieces
I rocked her and sang old rhymes.

Now again the vase holds water
And the child has mended me.

PASSION IN THE WIND
Roseann Clark



Classroom Control And Attention Deficit Disorder: The Fabrication of a Disease

1st Place

by Kathy Koehler

Today's grade school classroom is overcrowded, its menagerie of students overwhelming, and its harried teacher overwrought. Such conditions make meeting the developmental needs of each student totally unfeasible. Providing quality education within such a structure is next to impossible. Harder still is modifying the structure itself. This rigidity has led to the invention of a scapegoat pseudo-disease known as Attention Deficit Disorder, and the practice of chemically altering healthy children to accommodate in an inept system.

Little Charlie sits swinging his legs and daydreaming. His feet rhythmically thump the teacher's desk, against which his own has once again been relocated. This was his station for most of the previous school year, and since he is repeating the second grade anyway, he half expects to maintain the same seating arrangement. At present, teacher is not at her desk. Teacher is at the blackboard talking and writing, writing and talking, but Charlie is not the least bit interested. Instead he is thinking about his perfectly fine lawn mower he saw on his way to school today, a perfectly fine mower some dummy had seen fit to just throw away! Now he can't wait for the school day to end. He simply has to get to that mower before the garbage men come and cart it off. If he can only get to it in time, he will push it home, dismantle and rebuild it, then sell it for a bundle like that old T.V. set and that stereo he had salvaged. Suddenly his train of thought is derailed by an unfamiliar sensation. A nasty tasting fluid sputters from his mouth and dribbles embarrassingly down his chin. The ink from a pen he had been sucking on has backed up through the cartridge and spilled out all over his teeth, tongue and lips. Teacher is no longer at the blackboard. She is now glaring down at him with "that face." It is the same face Mom and Dad will be wearing when he presents them with the note teacher is sure to write. Charlie wishes he could just disappear. Then he would never have to return to this awful classroom where he didn't belong in the first place. This environment definitely was not set up for kids like him, kids displaying all the "classic symptoms": the hyperactivity, the distractibility, the impatience, the disruptive behavior, and of course, the willfulness, all characteristics that seem quite

normal until these children are required to attend school. Charlie is just one of a growing number of students presumed to be learning disabled. He is nine years old, in the second grade, and fixedly, irrefutably labeled.

Charlie is a typical example of an A.D.D. (Attention Deficit Disorder) child and in all probability, will be chemically adjusted to fit our existing educational system. His parents will likely be pressured by an exasperated teacher or other "developmental expert," to seek a chemical solution to their child's perceived behavioral abnormality. In the guise of therapy, psycho-stimulant drugs such as Ritalin and Dexadrine may be administered. Unfortunately, these drugs present a genuine health risk to those ingesting them, and there are a lot of children being forced to ingest them. So, in this respect at least, Charlie is not alone. For although public law 92-142 guarantees the education of every child, many so called A.D.D. children simply are not able to learn within the standard format of today's classroom. But, as it involves greater effort to do away with starvation than to bury its victims, pharmaceuticals are being used to bury the needs of these children. Essentially, we are unconscionably sacrificing their individuality for the sake of expediency.

In addition to its negative physical side effects, this chemical "panacea" also carries a cache of debilitating psychological baggage. The "affected" child frequently blames "his disorder" for overt misconduct, and uses this faulty reasoning to rationalize his misbehavior. He often becomes overly sensitive due to his much noted "shortcomings" and, consequently, may suffer all the maiming byproducts of low self-esteem. Buying into the A.D.D. myth, his brainwashed parents may actually consider him mentally handicapped and lower their standards for acceptable behavior where he is concerned. This can only exacerbate the problem, and impede a true and lasting solution.

Given that 40% of American Children are said to be hyperactive, it seems ludicrous to consider this characteristic abnormal. Add to this the inability to produce biological or anatomical evidence of its existence and this trumped-up disorder loses credibility altogether. Since the existence of physiological abnormality was refuted as a factor, the very name of this bogus disease had to be doctored from Minimal Brain Damage (circa 1950) to today's less concrete Attention Deficit Disorder. The obscure nature of its new epithet only serves to demonstrate how far we are willing to go to support this sham.

With so many of our children unable to adapt to the existing classroom environment, we must admit there is cause for concern. Chemically altering the student cannot be the solution since he, in

truth, is not the problem. We need to re-think our stiff approach to education, we need a more balanced ratio of students per teacher, we need specialized programs and assignments that will highlight distinct abilities and talents, and we need an effective, non-judgmental method of discipline in our schools. But most of all, we need to recognize the problem for what it is. We must realize that one cannot train a child as one would an animal, nor can one program him like a computer. One can only hope to teach a child. It is that simple, and that complex. Those who are interested only in the mechanical transference of information should consider a career in data processing. Those who demand total obedience and conformity would make excellent S.S. officers. But those who recognize the sanctity of the individual and are committed to helping him achieve his maximum potential, only those deserve to be called teacher.



J.B.P. & B.C.
J. Liva

Paper Pyramids

by Carol O'Connor

Heart beats dance
across the screen
to the monotonous melody
of repetitive beeps.

A button pressed,
images on the papyrus asp
slither from the machine
as paper pyramids,
their hieroglyphs painted
as death reliefs.

What buried treasures
do they hide
within my father's
wired chest?

He, my Pharaoh,
taking into his tomb
the riches of
his life.

I sit with strangled
breath and watch
the dance of death
in continuing archs.

Wondering...
when will the
last dance
come?

The Adoption

2nd Place

by Robin Cash

The car moved at a mediocre pace. I sat in the back seat, holding my little brother's hand securely in my own. A cold, November rain drizzled and spattered the car window. My stomach was clenched with dread and worry. It was going to be a very serious day. Even though I was only five years old I knew, my mother and stepfather had made sure that I knew, what an important turning point this was to be in all of our lives. We were headed for the county court house for the adoption proceedings of my three year old brother and myself; we were to be adopted legally, by our new stepfather.

From the front seat, which seemed miles away, my mother's black, penciled-on eyebrows arched as she drilled into me what I was to tell the judge when my brother and I were taken into chambers. Mother had said that since my brother, Bobby, was only three, I would have to tell the "court" how much we both wanted "Mark" to be our new real daddy, instead of just our stepdad. Solemnly, I stared out the window, blankly watching the gray scenery blur past. Having my stepfather adopt my brother and I was the last thing on earth I wanted.

While I gazed out the window, all of the horrible incidents that had happened since mother had married Mark came into my mind. He was a mean man, I hated him, and feared him. I tried not to show it, for my mother's sake; she seemed so happy now that she was married again. Mother had said that even though Mark has his "angry spells" that he is basically a good man, and I should be grateful that he wants to take care of all of us, especially now that he wants my brother and I to be his "legal" children. I looked over at my brother. He had pulled his hand out of mine, and was drawing pictures on the steamed up window with his finger. Maybe everything would be okay after all; just because I didn't like my stepdad wasn't reason enough to ruin things for everyone else.

In the front seat mother and Mark seemed to be in a really good mood. Watching my mom and stepdad act so happy, I began to relax a little, though the feeling of "walking on egg shells" was there, as always. Mark turned around to smile at Bobby and me. He had a nice smile, but I knew how quickly his face could turn black with the clouds of surging anger. The hatred that could blaze in his eyes at times frightened me so badly that I could hardly move. Mark was smiling now, though, and he promised to take everyone out to eat after we finished at the court house, providing everything went well, of course. He didn't have to tell me what that meant - the warning that flashed through his eyes did not escape me. My mother turned

to give me a look of admonition as well. I felt sick, and tense; I wondered if other "lucky" children who get adopted felt this way on their big day.

Mother announced that we had arrived, and that Mark was looking for a place to park. I trotted my legs up and down, nervously on the seat, a wave of panic rising inside of me. The only things I seemed able to think about were questions about my real dad. "Where did he go?", "Why did he go?", "Was it something that I did?" These questions raced through my mind. I could barely remember him. The memories that I did have were good and bad. There were "flash bulb" memories of violent fights between him and my mom, and there were also tender, loving ones of birthdays and special visits, then nothing. Mother had told me that my real father had gone to work and he never came back; she told me that every time I would ask about him. Now that she was married to Mark, it was quite clear that I was not to ask questions about my real father anymore. After all, "it might hurt Mark's feelings", she would say to me in that disapproving tone she used whenever I did something wrong. I learned to stop asking questions, out loud, anyway.

Mark pulled into the parking place and turned off the car. Mother turned around and gave both my brother and me a quick inspection to make sure we hadn't mussed our new outfits. Mark opened my door and took me by the hand to help me out of the car. We then went to get Bobby out. When Mark opened the car door, he saw Bobby's window drawings and gave him an embittered look, a look that I knew could mean real trouble on any other day. Bobby would get a reprieve for now, but I knew he would pay later. Mark didn't forget, and he obviously didn't like finger drawings on the car window, finger prints anywhere for that matter.

Mark's glowering expression faded, there was other business to attend to now. He led us all up the steps to the court house, hand in hand. We were about to become the perfect family.



MASKS FROM INIQUITY
Deborah Jozefiak

The Raftsmen's Episode Belongs in Huck

1st Place

by Robert Van Putten

In his "Note on the Text" at the end of the reference material section of the Mark Twain Library's 1985 edition of Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Robert Hirst, general editor of the Mark Twain Project at the University of California, points out a major flaw that exists in most other editions of Huck: the omission of the so-called Raftsmen's chapter from the original and practically all subsequent printings. This is not the only mistake or point of debate in the book, but it, along with the controversial ending, is generally held to be one of the two major areas of question. Even today, more than a hundred years after Huck's debut as a solo artist in 1885, the debate continues over the proper place for the passage. Does it belong in Life on the Mississippi, where it first appeared in 1883, or does it more rightfully belong in Huck, for which it was intended?

When Mark Twain finished his masterpiece Adventures of Huckleberry Finn and turned it over to his publisher in 1885, he asked that it be made available in a matched set with The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (first published in 1876). Charles Webster, Twain's publisher at the time, seeing problems in accommodating the author's request due to tremendous size differences between the two books, and looking for a way to pare Huck down, asked Twain to omit the passage. Having already used the piece in Life on the Mississippi, Twain agreed, and the piece was left out of Huck for the next sixty years. In 1942, Bernard DeVoto, then editor of the Mark Twain Papers and a recognized expert on Twain's work, restored the piece to its original place (Hirst 45). Thus began a debate that continues among Twain scholars.

Most who have read both versions of the book would probably agree that it is a better book with the Raftsmen's episode. Further, those who have read Life on the Mississippi would likely admit that the piece much more belongs to Huck than Life... in all ways. When the passage is used as chapter three of Life..., and titled "Frescoes From the Past," it is obvious that it was not intended to be so. In fact, Twain welds the piece into the book with a foreword and an afterword that explicitly state that it belongs elsewhere, namely the yet unfinished Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. Twain includes it in Life as a short glimpse at some of the types of men who relied upon the river for their work. But, there is an inconsistency in putting it there.

Life on the Mississippi is the story of Twain's years working on a steamboat and learning the physical river. It is much more a travelogue and a diary than it is a look at life in the then far West, which is what the Raftsmen's text as well as Huck Finn are. The style and tone of the piece are sharply in contrast with those in Life as well. The piece is in the dialect of the Southwest of the 1840's and is heavy in satire. In other words, it is written in exactly the same style and tone as Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. It stands apart from the rest of the text in Life on the Mississippi and really doesn't belong.

On the contrary, the piece fits into Huck without any qualifiers or problems. Of course, it should since that is its original home. But, there is more than intent to direct the piece toward inclusion in Huck. There are, in fact, many reasons why the chapter belongs in Adventures of Huckleberry Finn and , really, nowhere else. Its use elsewhere can be justifiable as the nineteenth century equivalent of the dust-jacket blurb, but it serves its best office only within the pages of Huckleberry Finn.

As has been stated, the stylistic devices used to write the piece are naturally those same ones used to create Huck, as the intent was to include the piece in that book. It is written as seen through the eyes of the fourteen-year-old Huck, and is narrated by Huck. Further, there is not a character in the Raftsmen's episode that does not belong in Huck Finn. The men of the raft are entirely acceptable within the context of Huck but become a bit of a condescending parody when used in Life on the Mississippi. Of course, the characterizations in Huck Finn are mostly parodies, but when Huck is telling the whole story there can be no condescension. Huck is no better than any of these men while the young Mark Twain, aspiring to become a river-boat pilot, clearly is. He even tells of the scorn for the raftsmen that the steamboat people have. In short, the attitude of the narrator of the Raftsmen's episode is entirely inconsistent with that of the narrator in Life in regards to these raftsmen. The piece just doesn't fit.

Conversely, the raftsmen are everything that the rest of the characters in Huck Finn are. They are generally ignorant and uneducated, as well as crude, uncivil, and boisterous. They are ruffians and drunks, and were it not for their jobs on the river, they would probably be bums. And yet, Twain intends that they be seen with a measure of admiration for the hardships they endure in their lives. They may not be much, but they deserve credit for who they are much like the little hobo Huck. He has all the attributes of any of these raftsmen, save a job, and yet Huck is infinitely deserving of admiration. His ethic is inspirational.

Also, much like the communal pictures of society in the rest of

Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, these men of the raft and river are inclined to a mob mentality and a tremendous degree of naivete in the matters of life. They generally talk only of the nonsensical things like kings and how to make cats fight, much like the other ignorants in Huck Finn, and they possess the superstitious element that Twain uses throughout Huck to symbolize ignorance. But, while these characters provide little beyond a picture of life as a raftsman, they are important in that they are the vehicle for Twain to deliver a pair of folk tales that are a wonderful picture of the zeitgeist of the nineteenth century expansionist America. They provide a history lesson and a touchstone with the past much like the stories of Davey Crockett, Mike Fink, and the Roaring Camp.

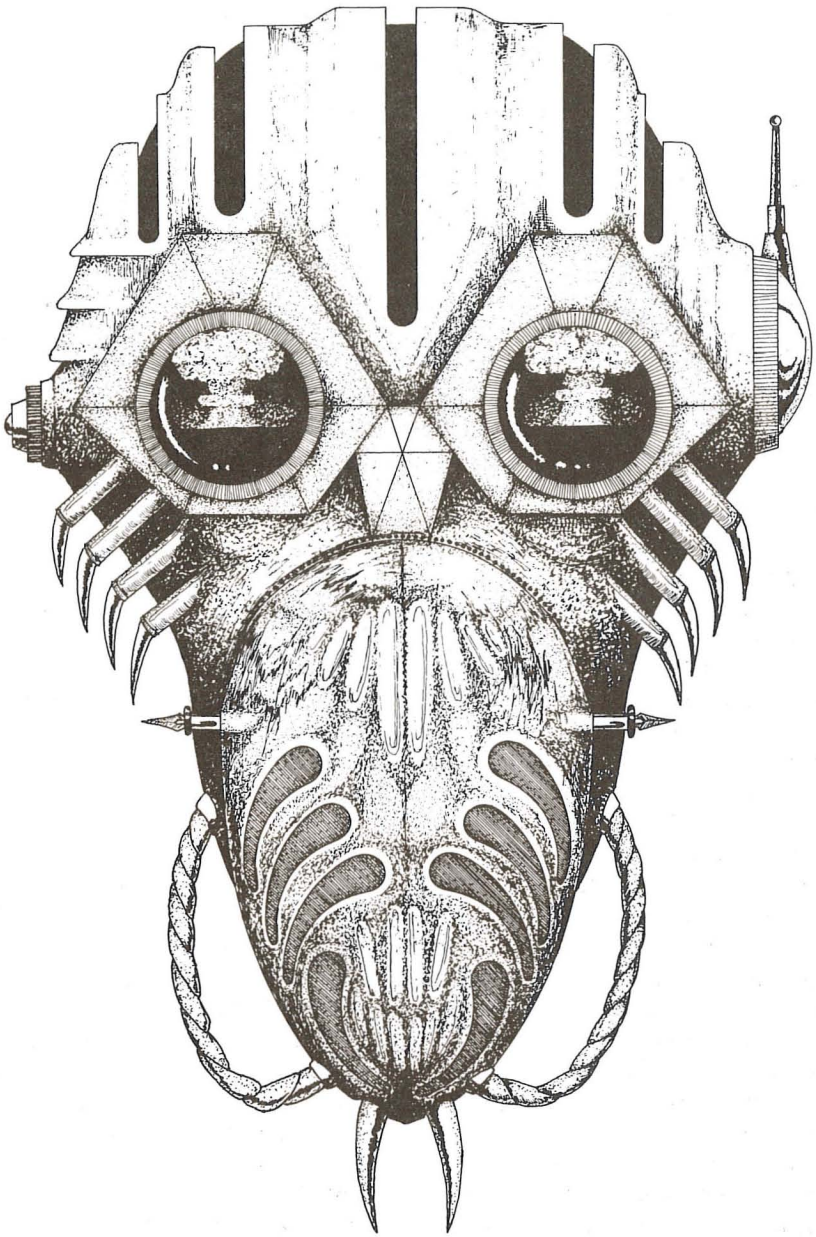
Far from the benign prose of Life on the Mississippi, the raftsmen's story does include a dash of the moralizing of Huck although unrelated to the black-white issue that drives the book for the most part. Much of the passage does fit well with Huck's assertion that "human beings can be awful cruel to one another." In fact, Huck himself is almost subjected to such cruelty when he is caught aboard the raft. But beyond the immediacy of Huck's predicament and the central issues of ignorance and cruelty, Twain makes use of the piece and the included folk tales to expand the basis for his thesis. As the character "Ed" says in relating the tale of Dick Allbright, "A body is always doing what he sees somebody doing, through there mayn't be no sense in it" (114). This is a clear reference to Twain's contempt for those who submit to the mob mentality. It makes a glaring statement about the types of behavior that occur later in Huck in the downfall of the King and the Duke, the Boggs-Sherburn incident, and the Grangerford-Shepherdson feud. Obviously, these are cases of there being "no sense in it." Finally, there are yet further reasons why the piece belongs most properly to Huck. For one, the comedic highpoint of the entire book occurs in the Raftsmen's episode. After Ed tells the long-winded story of the murdered baby "Charles William Allbright" and the haunted barrel that his body occupies pursuing and vexing rafts, Huck is caught hiding on the raft. When interrogated about his presence, Huck, unwilling to divulge his real name, resorts to another of his famously fantastic lies and, in doing so, utters his hilarious assertion of being "Charles William Allbright, sir" (122). While comedic value does not in any way require the piece to be in Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, it does point to the propriety of its inclusion there; there are few, if any uproariously funny passages in Life on the Mississippi while many appear in Huck. (None approaching this one for sheer laughter and joy, though.)

Through Huck's eyes the minute

facet of the western life and legend is provided to the reader. It is a parallel in Twain's body of work with his other stories of the young American West as seen through satirical eyes. Life on the Mississippi is a story of a river and a young man; the Raftsman's episode is the story of a young boy in a young America. Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is not the same without it, and Charles Webster was wrong in his suggestion that its omission from Huck Finn would not matter. Mark Twain wrote the piece for Huck, and it belongs to and in Huck Finn regardless of where else it may be found. After all, one can put flowers in a vase, but they will only live in the ground.

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MASK OF THE FUTURE
Eric Peterson

A Day In Midwinter

2nd Place

by Joe Eaton

The old man ritually placed the feeder guppies one by one into his fish tank. He lay on his bed watching, waiting for the larger fish to eat. He wondered when his wife would be home from the market. She left not an hour ago, but the old man had already begun to feel lonely. He watched the fish and thought of what he would do today. He perceived, as he sat up looking out his bedroom window, that the winter day would not be kind to his old body if he were to go out doors. Watching the wind tear through the row of pines that surrounded his house, he recalled the spring day that his wife and he had planted the natural property barrier. It seemed so long ago but not as long as it had actually been. He dreamed of how his youngest of three sons, Luke, had climbed to the top of one of those very pines and fell, breaking his collar bone.

The old man looked out towards the weathered barn. He thought to himself that he must put a new coat of paint on this spring. The thought made him happy for he loved the springtime. This spring, along with painting the barn, he would fix the tractor and start the garden. His wife loved to grow vegetables and she needed him to till the soil before she could plant. The old man rolled over and stared at the wall. Yes, he would do all that, in the spring, but spring was so far away today on this December afternoon.

A heavy snow had fallen during the night. The old man imagined that today would be a good day to rabbit hunt. If only his old frail bones could make it through the door. In a fit of energy, the old man stood up and faced his gun cabinet. He withdrew his favorite twelve gauge shotgun. It had been his father's Browning. He felt the wood stock, put it up to rest against his shoulder. It felt smooth against his wrinkled cheek. Holding the gun warmed him like sitting in front of a wood stove after sledding as a child. He put the gun back into the cabinet and sat back down on the bed. His eyes were heavy and his legs felt weak. He wanted to sleep but he was too proud, too hard of a worker to take an afternoon nap. He rolled off the bed.

"What to do. What to do. What in sam hell to do," the old man whispered. He walked down the hall to the kitchen sink. His arthritic hands balked against the task of putting a pot of water on to boil. The old man put a stopper in the sink as the pot began to boil. He mumbled something about not needing any damn medicine. He

poured the boiling water into the sink, hesitated momentarily, then thrust his hands into the water. The pain shot up his arm. The pain was incredible, but not a word was uttered. He had done this ritual every day for the last three years and was beginning not to feel the pain. He withdrew his hands and shook them violently, clenching and unclenching his fists. Done with arthritis for another day without the help of the damn doctor, he thought.

Having finished this daily chore, the old man went to the front room, turned on the television, and sat in his favorite chair. He was beginning to become really concerned about when his wife would be home by now. A television program showing graphic scenes of a Nazi concentration camp caught the old man's attention. He recalled the day that his unit had discovered the horrors that lurked behind the barbed wire gates of Treblinka. Many memories had come and gone in his life but this horror stayed always fresh in his mind. He recalled how the Jews behind those gates were so very skinny, so pitiful. Their skin stretched upon their bones much like the rabbit skins that the old man cured in his garage on the rusty metal pelt stretchers. Their eyes bulging near as much as their bellies. He felt faint, but the old man stood up and turned off the television. He walked back down the hall to his bedroom and began to put together worst-case-situations. Had his wife gotten into a car accident? Was she ill? He knew that he should not have let her go alone, but he was much too tired to go with her. He punished himself for not being there for her. He knew that she was in trouble. Had she perhaps run out of gas? Was she broken down on some desolate road? All of these thoughts moved through the old man's head. Soon it would be dark and it was blistering cold outside. The old man walked to his bed, pausing on the way to feel the coldness of the window glass.

The old man once more stood up and walked to the hall closet, having decided to go find her. He put on his shoes and his slip-over black rubber boots, his red and black patchwork coat, and his duck hunting hat. He hesitated, looking for his gloves, but was in too much of a hurry to spend much time looking. As he walked out the door, the wind dug into his body, piercing his open face like sewing needles. The force of the wind worked against the old man as he moved toward his Chevrolet pickup truck. He reached the truck and forced the key into the lock and tried to turn it to the left. With all his heart he pushed against the key, but the lock had frozen during the night. "Are you man or mouse?" the old man burst out as he gave one last effort to free the lock. With a crack that silenced the wind, the key snapped, one half in, one half outside the lock. The old man gasped, holding

his half key in his hand. He turned around one hundred eighty degrees and began his way back to the house. The trip back seemed much easier as the old man's mind was consumed by the thought of driving the Pontiac in the deep snow.

As he approached the door, he reached into his pocket and was shocked to find only lint, no keys. Suddenly a chill entered his body and he was colder than he had ever before been. He began to cry like a child, gasping for air between interval sobs of frustration. He checked his coat pockets to no avail. The old man sat down pondering how to get into his house. He was anxious to see his wife. He always thought that he would be there for her forever. The old man knew that in his younger years he would have found a way to break into his house. Now he was too tired to think. He wondered if his wife was really in trouble or if she would soon be home to find him like a fool locked outside in the cold. The old man closed his eyes for only a second, then lost the strength to open them. He leaned against the front door and waited for his wife to come home.



EMBRIONIC CELLULAR ACTIVITY
Jason Roda

College

2nd Place

by Sarah Prout

Walking into the mutant fugue in c minor
populated by the songs of superiority-
all young seek age.

I lean my tired head-
lazily, I twist infinitives
into knots.
worrying Gordian into semantics-
as I try to reconcile, life, sex, death
in 100 words or less.

Sitting alone, I ponder-
(knowing thinking is passe)
but daring to anyway-
why, where, what, and purpose?
in 100 words or less.

Never mind the topic-
the answers are all the same.
there is no absolute
it is a cannot be,
so the only thing to doubt
is a mutant fugue in minor key.

King Lear's Self-Discovery

2nd Place

by Elizabeth Dove

It was the Scotch poet Robert Burns who said "O wad some Pow'r the giftie gie us/ To see oursels as others see us." For many people such a gift could prove most unwelcome. Self-knowledge is neither easy to achieve nor pleasant to contemplate. What we have come to speak of as the human psyche is often fragile. Psychologists say that psychoanalysis is a painful process: there are those who are unable to handle it. So it was with Lear.

Almost four centuries ago William Shakespeare took the life story of an old English king and his daughter--a life already so far removed in the dim past that history was scarcely distinguishable from myth--and wove of it a play so devastating that for generations people could not bear to watch it.

The tragedy King Lear is many things. It is a play about old age and about the relationship of aging parents to adult children--an increasingly troublesome problem today when most of the advanced countries have greying populations. It is about filial devotion and sibling rivalries, loyalty and treachery, intrigue and deceit, and finally, about madness and death.

Through it all, old King Lear moves toward his inevitable doom as his family and his kingdom disintegrate around him. There is a reciprocal relationship between his developing insanity and his on-going self-discovery. The magnitude of his grief and the devastating awareness of his own guilt bring madness, but the madness, itself, brings flashes of clarity that are truly insightful.

It is not certain whether Lear's decision to divide his kingdom in his lifetime was an ill-conceived attempt to avoid the very civil conflict it actually precipitated, or if it was simply a royal whim. If, like other monarchs real and fictional, he believed the king above the laws of man and nature, he soon found otherwise. Abdication of responsibility created more problems than it solved. Trying to maintain special privileges and considerations in a kingdom no longer his, like trying to eat one's cake and have it, too, was never feasible. Ironically, had there been the remotest chance of the plan succeeding, it was destroyed when he disowned and banished Cordelia. Of all his daughters, she alone might have maintained stability in the land because of her loyalty to him, her integrity, and her personal popularity.

One may have ambivalent feelings about the Lear-Cordelia confrontation, a misunderstanding whose overtones suggest a generation gap. Lear's demand for extravagant praise is an open invitation to flattery and deceit, yet he sees gratitude as his just reward for a major gift and feels deserving of homage both as king and as father. Cordelia, aware of her sisters' hypocrisy,

is angry both with them for deceiving her father and with him for allowing himself to be deceived. She takes the high moral ground by refusing to join in so monstrous a game. Ethically, she is correct, even noble. But she is also a daughter who, out of wounded pride, refused an aging father's need for reassurance of her love. Lear, outraged, overreacts, and the downward spiral begins.

There is a second plot which closely parallels the first. Gloucester, a noble loyal to the king, mistakenly believes his evil bastard son Edmund when he brings false charges against his innocent brother, Edgar. The father orders the good son tracked down and killed. Edgar vanishes then reappears in disguise, and ministers to his father in his further tribulations. Old Gloucester, blinded, bleeding, suicidal, wracked with guilt for misjudging Edgar, is a powerfully tragic figure. But even he is dwarfed by mad Lear.

Lear, refused hospitality and verbally abused by both Regan and Goneril, wanders off into the storm, accompanied by his faithful Fool and by his loyal retainer Kent. This Kent, a noble, had dared speak up for Cordelia and had been summarily banished for his pains. Now he has returned, disguised, to serve his king -- another parallel between the Lear and Gloucester plots.

Lear's adventure in self-discovery begins when he becomes aware of rejection ('a most faint neglect') on the part of his daughter Goneril. He demands of her servant "Who am I?" Instead of the proper reply, 'the King', the servant responds: "My lady's father." From this point on, Lear realizes what he has lost and concedes that he has let "folly" replace "judgment." He is aware that his sanity is slipping away, and rails against it: "O, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven! Keep me in temper, I would not be mad!" He knows both unfilial sisters have turned on him (as they will later turn against each other). He literally beats himself over the head for what he has done to Cordelia. When Lear asks the fool if he would call him (Lear)"fool," the fool replies: "All other titles thow hast given away; that thou wast born with."

Everything comes too late for Lear. He understands the loyalty of Cordelia (and Kent) only after they have been banished and the greed and duplicity of Goneril and Regan only after he has given them his kingdom: "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is," he mourns, "to have a thankless child!"

He learns wisdom only after his mind is too far gone to contain it. He discovers his humanity only when he is scarcely human. Cold, wet, half-mad, "My wits begin to turn," he pauses outside the hovel that had been found to shelter him and says: "How dost my boy? Art cold?"

Lastly, he learns what it might have meant to be a king, but only after he has lost his kingdom. It is, perhaps, the final irony that he is now able to say:

Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
Your looped and windowed raggedness, defend you
From seasons such as these? O, I have ta'en
Too little care of this.

This is the bitterest of Shakespeare's plays. It does not turn out well for anyone. Cordelia, who has returned with her husband to save her father's kingdom, dies. Heart-broken, old Lear cannot survive her loss. The ever-faithful Kent is prepared to follow them. With utter simplicity he says:

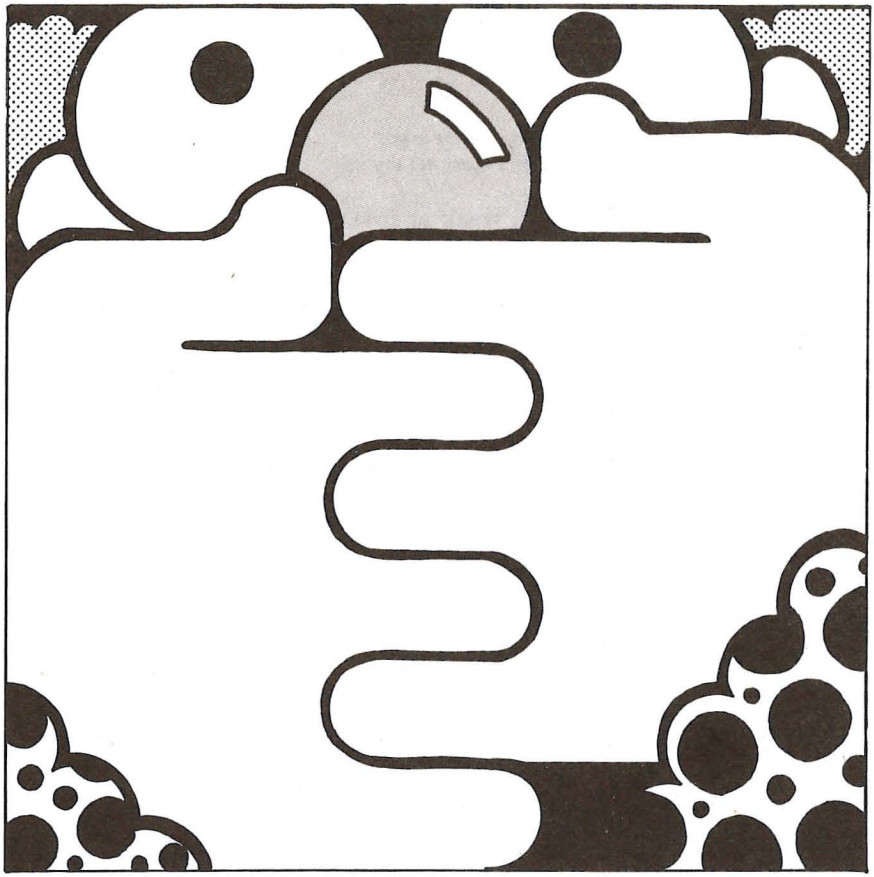
I have a journey, sir, shortly to go.
My master calls me; I must not say no.

Albany (Goneril's husband), weak at first, makes his stand for justice, supports Lear and denounces Goneril. He survives, but loses his wife, first to another man, then to death. Both of the scheming sisters die violently, as does the devious Edmund whom they both desired. Edmund repents his folly at the end tries (too late) to countermand the order for Cordelia's death. Edgar, having slain his brother and thus avenged his father, survives, but a fratricide is not apt to be happy.

As for the Fool, his role is finished. The Fool, of course, always was the most perceptive. He knew, when he cast in his lot with the King, that it could end in grief. As he told Kent:

That sir which serves and seeks for gain
And follows but for form.
Will pack when it begins to rain
And leave thee in the storm.
But I will tarry; the fool will stay
And let the wiseman fly.

What the Fool told the King: "Thou shouldst not have been old till thou hadst been wise," is still current today and of universal significance. Now we phrase it a little differently. We grow too soon old and too late smart!



CLOWN
T.J. Tucker

The First Dance

by Carol O'Connor

Floating in the fluid silence,
performing my animated dance
to my mother's staccato heartbeat.
Circling, circling the womb with
tiny kicks, propelling myself
with my quiet cha-cha.
Nature's tunes transposed
into this instinctive dance.
Buffeting my warm, dark chamber
with prehistoric amphibian sways.
This, my dance of life.



NATURE
Cheryl Worona

Haunted

by Penny Teeple

There are some stories best left untold. These are the others - the ones that leap from my pen with a life of their own. Like wayward children, grown old and restless in my arms, they will not be held. It is not so much, then, that I want to tell them as that they want to be told. Caught in their motion - pen in hand - the wing-beat of their words fluttering against my skull - I set them free.

So step with me over the threshold of reality, and you decide which is that we really see and which a mere reflection of what will be.....

Let's see - I was seventeen, well almost, but I'd lied about it so often that it sounded true to me too. Anyway, I was close enough in some ways and way beyond in others and when you're seventeen (almost), age doesn't matter anyway. At least that's what you go around telling people who are hell-bent on reminding you how young you are. Besides, I felt old - real old - like I'd seen it all and done it all and pretty much knew it all which is what people who don't know anything yet go around telling themselves.

I imagined myself a sophisticated, mature woman. Even those disturbing images in the mirror that resembled something like a stick figure wrapped in hair did little to squelch my self image. The mirror lied.

He was thirty-three but looked seventeen. Curly blond hair, cool green eyes and a big boyish grin topped off a set of bronzed muscles no mirror would deny.

We met in the rain. One of those soggy, grey days that holds out no hope for excitement. Boring days - stuck on campus - broke - nothing to do. Shelly and I were lying on our beds feeling vague, talking about boys. There are two on a neighboring campus that haven't seemed interesting until now but these are desperate times and you know how it is at seventeen.....

So there we are, my roommate and I out on old route 13 hitchhiking towards adventure. Adventure is not easily come by in Clinton County, which boasts a tiny Quaker college, two bars, a bakery, one gas station, one grocery store, one fast-food burger joint appropriately nicknamed "Burger Death" and a faded green sign that says "Welcome to Clinton County, Hog Capital of the Nation" - get the picture? Not exactly the stuff stories are made of but we're stuck with it having been lured here by glossy college catalogs and parents who figured it was a safe place to stash their daughters. So, like I said, there we are, two dripping co-

eds, thumbs held out about as high as our hopes. There is not a lot of tourist traffic in the Hog Capital and even fewer natives qualified to drive a car.

It was becoming a long walk when along comes this beat-up blue station wagon. It doesn't look like it's capable of getting where we're going and it smells like manure, but it is shelter and we are beyond being picky. Besides the driver looks pretty cool for a farmer, so in we go. Shelly hops in the front and starts chattering away - she is nervous. I climb into the back seat and try to keep my teeth from chattering. He says, "Where you boys headed?" Shelly looks offended and I giggle. He looks in the rear view mirror, and I catch his eyes catching mine as he says, "Pardon me, Ladies." We all laugh and it is a beginning.

We never do make it to where we are headed but we do make it to his house. Big old farm house, big sweeping porch, lots of windows, big trees, big overstuffed furniture, everything big like Alice through the looking glass or Texas. A couple of dogs, a few cats and some teenagers are lying around on braided rugs feeding apple wood to a big pot-bellied stove. Some more dogs wander in and some more kids - seems he collects strays. Runs a sort of half-way house for half-way people with the potential to fill out.

He hangs up wet clothes, gives us warm blankets and hot tea, and lectures on what can happen to young ladies foolish enough to hitchhike - even in the backwoods hog capital of the nation. We give back quiet thank-you's and faulty promises about being careful in the future. Then we just kind of hang out talking about college and religion, our families, Viet Nam and lots of philosophy mingled in with human horrors. Halfway to dawn everyone else has given up the debate and crashed out somewhere in all those rooms upstairs and we are left before a dying fire, one kind - hearted collector and one teenaged stray, wrapped in a blanket. I lose my age in the darkness and no longer know how old I am, but I am wiser because wedged beneath him I have learned how little I know.

"Are you scared?"

"No" I say because I am.

"Look at me," and I do and I'm lost somewhere in the mirror of his eyes and he is moving deep inside me and we are permanently bound. We drift through something so fragile it can't be seen, so powerful it can't be denied and so ageless we lose track of time. It takes two days to finally surface and rejoin the outside world.

I thought seventeen was too old-old and thirty-three damn near perfect, and he thought seventeen was too young and thirty-three too old and the whole damn thing was just too much. I was Protestant and he was Catholic. I had lost my faith about the time most kids give up on Santa and, as youth is preordained to do, never felt guilty.

He had kept his and, as Catholics are trained to do, always felt guilty.

"What am I doing? Just what the hell am I doing?" he would wail at himself after spending long hours in his bed knowing exactly what he was doing. I would be the wise and sultry woman: light a cigarette, look solemn and confused and say nothing. I wanted this man and when his enormous Catholic conscience wasn't choking him, he wanted me.

"I'm old enough to be your father," he'd say. How original - know any other cliches? Sarcasm was my biggest weapon. "Why don't you go out with boys your own age? Be young while you can. When you're just becoming a woman, I'll be an old man. You NEED someone your own age!"

So be it. Seems at seventeen (really by now), I had little control over my temper and even less over my hormones, so off I'd go to smoothed-cheeked boys with starry eyes and even less control over their hormones. These were brief and boring affairs in which I secretly hoped I'd be killed by some psychotic boy-child who had been sexually abused by his mother just so HE could read the headlines and know that it was HIS fault.

Instead of sensational headlines I would end up with a close encounter of the shallow kind. When I couldn't take the pressure anymore, I'd stomp back into that big house, fling my behavior at his feet and TELL him it was all HIS fault. By then he would be frantic with worry and so relieved that I WAS still alive that things would be perfect in paradise - for awhile - which is about as long as Adam and Eve lasted too. Eventually the Catholic conscience would rise again and faithless youth would resort to shameless sarcasm and there we'd be - back on the bus to Hell. Freud could have written textbooks here.

And so it went for a couple of yo-yo years of youth until one spring night the headlines came too close. All the elements were there. One big, drunk football player who really did hate his mother (and his sister) and maybe it was she he was really slapping in the dark, but the blows were raining down on me. Big blocks of black pica print: **CO-ED** slap **FOUND SLAIN** slap **NEAR COWAN LAKE** slap. One blow landed so hard he lost his grip and I ran.

Pumped up with fear and memories, I run and run. Skimming over wet grass and mud, feet flying, I run. Head down through weeds and brush and brambles, I run. On and on through the night shadows until, finally there is pavement under my feet - old route 13. I catch a ride with a car load of kids so freaked out on mescaline that they don't even ask questions - just slide over and then, tires screaming on asphalt, take off into the night. They pull over near the old farm house and I jump out running, bony fingers of fear snatching at my feet pounding across the porch. Lights snap on

and he is there - strong, warm, smiling and in a gush of helplessness the truth comes out...

"Twelve - I was twelve - young - old - I don't know - just twelve. There are three of them - maybe twenty - O.K. - I don't know. One of them has blue eyes and blond hair and looks like Prince Charming in the story books and it's all so confusing. Prince Charming with the golden sword and his two faithful companions. He smiles - nice smile - perfect white teeth and suddenly I am falling and he is on top of me and I am kicking, screaming, scared and the prince just smiles. His faithful companions hold my feet and hands and the Prince smiles driving the sword deep between my legs. It hurts - HURTS! - and I don't know - I scream, but his mouth, crushed over mine, catches it and the scream bounces back inside my head, a great piercing wave of sound that numbs me. When he moves away and the other two take over I don't even fight them - I DON'T EVEN FIGHT! I'm not afraid. Where I am there is nothing left to fear. No fairy tales - no God - nothing to lose, just the sound of traffic in the distance and blood mixed with thick white stuff running down my legs. I pull on torn jeans - can't find my shoes but I walk home anyway, fearless in the dark city streets. There is Dad in the doorway - big, solid protector of the Princess. I start to cry - big, loud sobs letting out the screams still bouncing around in my head and he slaps me - hard - and he screams,

"What did you expect? Why weren't you home where you belong? None of this would have happened! WHAT DID YOU EXPECT? rape - huh! Mother, look at her, just look at what we've raised. TELL NO ONE, YOU HEAR ME? NO ONE!"

I stay quiet through getting dressed, through the drive in the dark, through the bright lights of the hospital, through the probing and cleaning and bandaging, I stay quiet. Through all the stares and questioning, I stay quiet and emerge from the white gloved hands good as new - as long as I - "TELL NO ONE!" This is the voice of authority, of God and right and wrong. There are no clean lines anymore just a grey mushy area inside me - "TELL NO ONE!" and I do not, I am wordless.

Until years later and the snap of a porch light somewhere on old route 13. There they are, old ragged words spilling out like vomit and I do. Suspended by his arms over the porch rail, I retch until my sides ache and then I hit him - hard - over and over. I want him to kill me. He stands there, quietly as I hit and hit and hit and he carries me inside still hitting. We stand under the shower, warm water washing away the words, and I cry until the water turns cold and I am finally empty.

Later, lying on top of him, we sleep - deep wounded sleep. When

I wake up he is still inside me, holding me and crying. I know that I am twelve again - back where I stopped understanding and he is thirty-five now and maybe he's always understood. The gap is wide - too wide for our bodies to fill but we make love anyway, fiercely, over and over.....

"Are your scared?"

"Maybe," but I no longer am.

"Look at me." And I do but a few found hours don't begin to fill all the long lost years. When the sun goes down, he loans me a clean shirt knowing I won't be back to return it.



WOLF
Donna Baillod

First Confession

1st Place

by L.A. Shymko

As I drive my daughter, Melissa, to her First Reconciliation (it's not called confession any longer), I am struck by how calm and collected she is. She doesn't seem the least bit nervous. She is looking out the car window, humming a tune to herself. Did I appear this calm on the day of my First Confession?

As I remember it, confession was a real nail-biting affair for me, the first one being the worst. I went to St. Mary's Catholic School. Our religious instruction was handled by our second grade teacher, Mrs. Lazurka. She was a mild mannered, good-intentioned soul who didn't have a clue to the real world. That put her on even terms with the rest of us. One of her assignments for us was to memorize and recite prayers. She posted a prayer chart and next to my name was the least amount of stars. I had the minimum you could have and still be considered a Catholic. Mrs. Lazurka and her cavernous nose gave us a fairly graphic description of hell. I was pretty sure I did not want to go to hell, and purgatory didn't sound too swift, either.

I listened attentively as Mrs. Lazurka instructed us to make sure we told Father all our sins, not to hold back, no matter how hideous the offense. Now, what was I going to do? I couldn't remember how many times I hit my sister, Linda, or how many times I disobeyed my parents. Did this mean hell, or the very least purgatory? I would never be with the rest of my family in heaven. I would be stuck on a lower level for eternity. This terrified me. I could hardly sleep the night before the big confession.

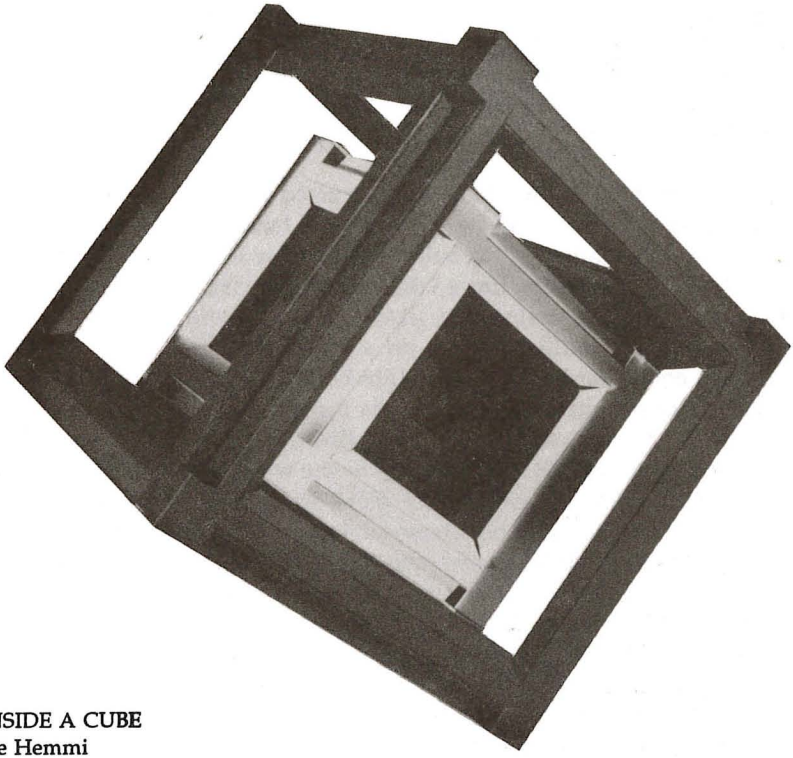
As all 48 of us second graders filed into the pews in church, you could hear a pin drop. As I think back now, I realize they were just as scared as I was. At the time, I thought I must surely be the worst sinner there. I tried my best to be invisible in my scratchy plaid wool uniform, which could measure no more than three inches above the kneeler while kneeling. To add to my despair, I was placed between Ann Nuttle, the pants wetter, and Eric Kennedy, the nose picker. That certainly made the time go faster.

Then the worst happened. My stomach started to churn. I felt like I was going to be sick. I raised my hand, but not quite quick enough. Before I could stop myself, I had up-chucked on the back of Mrs. Lazurka's dress, splashing vomit on some of my nearest and dearest friends. The girls started screeching and the boys pinched their noses saying, "Gross!" How could this happen to me? It must be a sign from God. I was certain I was doomed. The rest of the day is a blur. Maybe my memory is being kind. I remember

that Father Welch set up a special time for my confession. I no longer had anonymity on my side. I was singled out and he would know the criminal's name: Lori.

Confession was not as bad as I had imagined it was going to be. As I spilled out my crimes, Father Welch stuttered the appropriate responses. I couldn't recount all my heinous acts, but I wasn't struck by lightning. My punishment, penance, was five "Our Fathers" and five "Hail Marys". Years later, I found out Father Welch handed out the same sentence no matter what the sin. That is little comfort to me now.

As Melissa and I near St. Mary's Church, she looks at me and asks, "Mom, were you nervous when you made your First Reconciliation?" I look her straight in the eye and lie blatantly, "No." I guess I'll just take my chances.



INSIDE A CUBE
Joe Hemmi



REPETITION OF DELIRIUM
Jason Roda

Naturalism in Flight

by Robert Van Putten

When finished with the reading of John Steinbeck's "Flight", the reader, if an admirer of Steinbeck, may feel as though something is missing. There does not seem to be any of the moralism present that is such a large part of the author's other work. In any other way this story has all the marks of a Steinbeck work: the Mexican-Americans of the familiar Salinas Valley, the wonderful descriptives that provide his readers with unforgettable images of distant places, the implied continuity of the natural progression of life and universal order, and the beauty of simplicity. Yet, with the absence of an explicit message, it is almost too easy for eyes accustomed to Steinbeck's style to overlook the theme of this story. Here the conflicts are much more man against environment than man against inhumanity. This is a naturalistic story rather than the author's usual realism, and this is where preconceptions cause trouble.

To begin the story, Steinbeck creates a hostile surrounding for his characters to live in that is a foreground rather than a background. His words create a cold and sterile understanding in the reader's mind. This is the home of Pepe - a boy of nineteen who wants very much to be thought a man. For ten years the boy has been fatherless and, in many ways, alone. The eldest of three children by several years, there is no male presence for Pepe to compare to and define his masculinity against available. He wants to be a man and should be, but knows little about what it is that makes a man. Pepe has inherited nothing from his father but the knife that will instigate his death. And while his mother is a hardworking and devout woman who loves her children, she cannot show Pepe the way. "A boy gets to be a man when a man is needed," she says [1346], and accepts the way Pepe is: shy, childish, and more than a bit lazy. It is all she can do to feed the family given the resources at hand. And what she has been given is spare.

"The wild coast" Steinbeck calls it. Here the sea pounds on rocks rather than softly drifting in and out. Here the sea-spray is stinging rather than a veil providing the briny smell of the sea we know from the author's other works. Here main street does not crawl down to the water's edge. A pathway falling down a cliff provides Pepe Torres's family with access to the abalones they must eat for their dinner. It is from this less than idyllic setting that Pepe must flee after killing a man with his

inheritances of a switchblade and fatherlessness. As the boy rides off to town alone for the first time, asserting his manhood, he, in fact, predicts his future. He will indeed be a man, as he wishes, but it will cost him more than his innocence. Steinbeck uses the contrasting environments in the rest of this story as symbols of Pepe's transformation and loss. His sea-side home is far less than perfect, but his immediate future is a desert of loneliness and despair.

Only between the two extremes of setting does the author provide Pepe with a peaceful, dark, and beautiful environment of transition. Steinbeck has often been called a "mystic", and in the redwood of the boy's flight he creates an incredibly mystical feeling. As the child matures in a few short hours of life, he rides through a surreal stretch of forest and streams on "a well worn path, dark soft leaf-mould earth strewn with broken pieces of sandstone" (1347). Here Pepe is safe, independent, and at peace. Here, in this misty purple and green cathedral we first see the boy as the man he wishes to be. Enveloped in the perpetual dusk of the towering trees, Pepe escapes his past and troubles. But, just as the woods must end, so must the boy's serenity. On the other side of the mountains and trees lies a desert as unforgiving as those who have chased the boy here. It is symbolically telling the boy's future.

in the desert valleys and foothills, Steinbeck's prose shifts rapidly from words of heavy solitude to ones of sharp, angry scorn. Now Pepe is going to pay for his transgression with much more than just his life. One by one, Steinbeck takes away the simple comforts the boy has and leaves him at the mercy of the sun. His hat, his horse, food and water, his blanket, and finally, his gun are lost. And yet, through all this, the shy, lanky, timid youth who began the story never loses control. Suffering terribly from hunger, dehydration, and injury, Pepe knows he is going to die, but never does he quit and cry the way a boy would. He has proven his claim to manhood. Even at the end, when Pepe makes a conscious decision to submit to the unknown pursuers rather than succumb to the sun and land, he accepts his bullet with the dignity of a man of strength.

Pepe travels a path from the sea to the desert that is factual in the context of the story, and metaphorical of life itself. It does not matter what the circumstances that propel him are. Nature denies him the most important tool that a boy has in his transformation to manhood, and then makes him pay for this lack with his life. And, while the boy's death here is the direct result of human action, human nature is not the focus of the story (unless one considers the growth of the boy under the circumstances). In "Flight" Steinbeck shows nature as the ultimate judge of fate.

She Being
(with apologies to e.e. cummings)

1st Place

by Joe Horner

she being

an earlier
 model: and
having seen
betterdays (
not really
qualifying
as vintage
) and might
not be
worth the
trouble of starting
(although all of those miles proved

she was no
lemon
)
having the ether
ready i kicked her over *var00m* (what do ya know
the first crank)
the first few moments were awkward
until that bluesmoke quit blowing out the rear end (

SURE
one of those new little plastic jobs
wouldn't do that while warming up
but they're not built for weather i have to drive
in and i'm not the
kind of fella that
can stand
to be
 snowed
 in
)
i figured whatthehell and

dropped her into drive and
laid down heavy on the gas
she took off even faster than i had hoped
had to back off even though she had
alot more and was willing to
give it up right now BUT i
knewit would be best if i
was out past the
stoplights
before i topped her out

after about thi-
-rty minutes of
stopandgo
the long uninterrupted stretch of road lay out infront of me
so i stopped put on my safety belt
(you never know what you
might run into out there).
next thing i knew i had her all the way open
and away we
puh
wouldn't you know it
she ran
out
of
g
a
s
.
(these older models
cant go as far on
half a tank)
pushing her back
to the texaco
i started to wonder if
a book could be judged
by the cover
after i tanked her up
with some of that high octane stuff

she seemed even more ready we tore out of
the station throwing pieces of road behind
us; the speedometer was buried her tac was deepinto the red

at that speed no one would have seen the bridgeout signs
she plowed through barricades that would have stopped one of
those newer jobs cold, like a runawaytrain before i knew it
w e w e r e
a i r b o r n

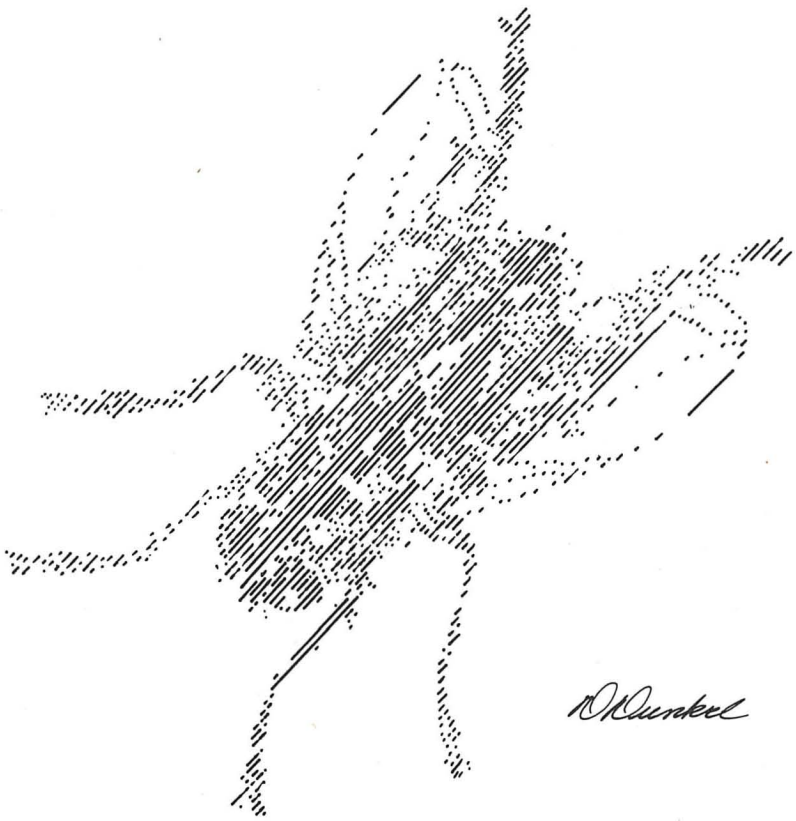
nothing above
even less

below

when we hit the side she
bottomed out

and
stalled
as i looked back
and saw the size ofthe abyss
she had carried me across i realized why
most like em wi-
-th such
big

motors.



UNTITLED
Debra Dunkel

The Affair

1st Place

by Penny Strauss

I never thought that it would happen to me - that I would have an affair. When we first met, there was an overwhelming presence of power that frightened me and at the same time, a sense of mystery and intrigue. As much as I wanted nothing to do with you, I had to come closer. I had to know more about you. Like a magnet, I was drawn to you. I hated you, feared you immediately, because I liked being in control. With you I was a helpless as a young child lost in the huge department store because the sight of a fascinating toy had led him away from the safety of his mother's arm.

There was no prior experience in my life that I could relate to for knowledge of how to handle you or my feelings. I wasn't wise enough to see that you would so quickly become my only purpose for living one day to the next. My life had been so protected, so organized and ordered. I was so naive, even ignorant, to the forces of power and seduction and control, unaware until the moment we met, that anyone or anything could affect me so, could stimulate me to such heights of exhilaration. I had worked hard all of my life to build walls of safety around me. I though they were strong enough to keep anything for enough away from me so that I would always appear to be confident and strong, never weak or fearful. Yet with just a touch, no words ever spoken between us, my protection crumbled and I was yours for the taking.

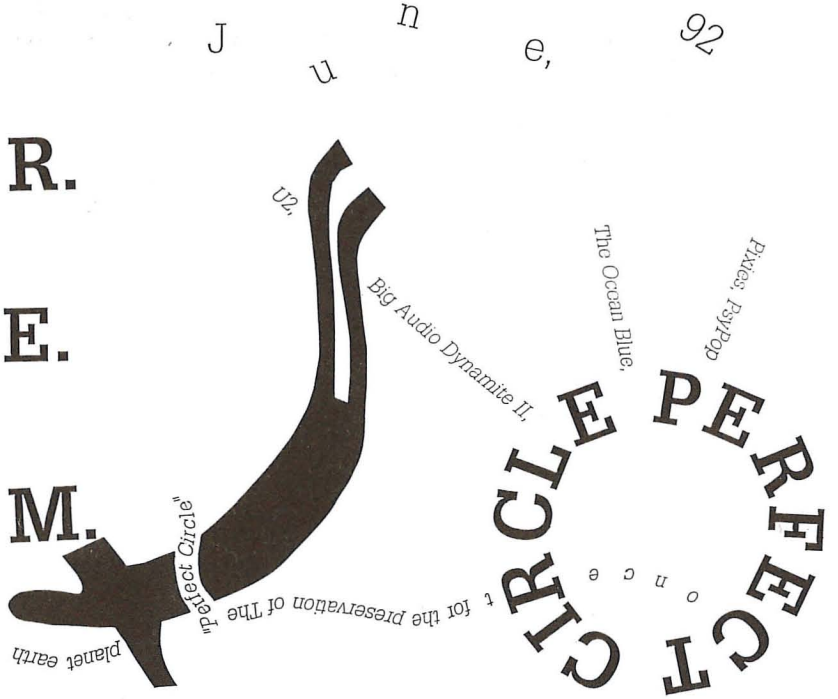
It was the touch that destroyed me and destroyed the image I had always portrayed. Even today, after so much time has gone by, I wonder why there ever had to be that first touch. It seemed as if we connected immediately. Electricity flowed between us and I, being weaker, could not stay away. You dominated my every thought, every waking moment, and I was crazy with pain of separation whenever I had to leave you. Your presence, your attraction, was something so new to me, something unknown in my life. You were unexplored territory and I had to know you. I had to find out what you were made of, and, most of all, I had to find a way to overcome the passion that was driving me so that I could once again be in control of my feelings. And so I gave myself to you wholly and completely.

My submission to you seemed to me at first a sign of my frailty. For a time I lacked direction and purpose if everything I did could not involve you. But soon I began to feel a boldness that I had not discovered in myself before. Though it appeared that you controlled my life, it was perhaps just the opposite. You needed my touch, my energy, my enthusiasm. The more we were together, the more I felt it. I became an explorer, probing into the

secrets of your life further and further and finding that the pleasures we shared whenever we were together were tantalizing, rewarding, and fulfilling. We were surely made for each other. Nothing else in my life could bring me such ecstasy.

As I look back now, I see that it was in discovering my own self, and not in discovering you, that I became strong enough to let go of you. I had grown into a person who was bold and strong and confident, and I did not need to hide my imperfections or even my sins behind walls of pretense. You gave me this and in doing so, our relationship came to a most climactic end.

My dear computer, today when I touch you, the spark and electricity is still there but it is no longer seductive or overpowering. You will always arouse in me a sense of challenge and a desire to achieve the peak of perfection. Your still untapped mysteries continue to attract me to you, but today we are working partners rather than the tempter and the tempted. When others attack you because of your superior ways and power, I come to you defense because I have come the understand you in a way no one sees. I no longer live in forbidden infatuation. We are friends.



PERFECT CIRCLE
Shawn Smith

"V.S." Means Very Shortsighted Sometimes

by Robert Van Putten

In the critical essay "Huck Finn and the Cruelty of American Humor," written in 1941, V.S. Pritchett calls Twain and Poe the first true American authors enroute to proclaiming Adventures of Huckleberry Finn the first American masterpiece - if it is limited to the realm of comedic writing. Pritchett, an Englishman, says that the cynical nature of the American, disillusioned and rebelling against puritanical totalitarianism, leads directly to what he sees as the nostalgic charm of the book. Mr. Pritchett likens this feeling and what he designates as its product, to a similar circumstance in the Anglo-Irish writing of the late nineteenth century and creates a link of "colonialism" to base his ideas upon. And while Pritchett advises that everyone should read the book, he does not explain the title of his piece unless cruelty and humor are to be believed to occupy the same arena in Twain's work.

When describing the character of Huck, the author sees him as "an anarchist and a bum" and claims that Huck is "low-down plain ornery" because of the way his father raised him. When comparing Huck to Tom Sawyer, Pritchett says the Huck is impotent while Tom could build the new civilization that the America of Huck's fancy would be. He gives Tom this ability by virtue of his "imagination" alone. Pritchett also tells of a repugnance in Huck for ideals and claims that the book only works at all because of its lack of pity (308).

Well, Mr. Pritchett has, to bend a cliche, missed the boat to America. And by more than just a bit. It is almost hard to believe that anything that so entirely misses the point of Huck Finn could be included in a text about (and containing) Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. It would almost seem to beg for an asterisk beside it in the table of contents. But, perhaps this is being a bit harsh on a man who is not, after all, an American and can hardly be expected to understand American ideals. And yet, his use of the "comedic" pigeon-hole to confer the title of "masterpiece" upon Huck Finn is fully enough to have him shot. The book is wickedly funny, but the key word here is "wickedly". Perhaps this is where Pritchett makes his correlation to cruelty. If so, he would have served his purpose more fully by mentioning this point.

Further maddening is Pritchett's assertion that Twain and Poe are the first truly "American" writers. How does one relate Twain and Poe? Yes, they were both born

American, but that is pretty well the extent of their similarities. Twain was but ten when Poe died. And, while few can ever doubt the influence of Poe, his was not an overly "American" style. Many of Poe's works are not even about Americans. Also, while Poe is very often grim and morbid, Twain is rarely so.

If Pritchett has botched his discourse on Twain, he has committed a crime in his analysis of Huck. He would have his readers believe that Huckleberry Finn is an anarchist and a bum who ascribes to no ideals. Of course, any child who has read this book knows better. Huck may not be cogent of his virtue, and he certainly doesn't wear it like a badge, but it is exactly this that reinforces the beauty of his innocence in the mind of the reader. Yes, he is rough and uneducated, but Huck is more innately decent than all but a few in American literature.

In short, Mr. Pritchett has completely fallen short of understanding the work he pretends to decipher. His entire essay contains but one valid point about Adventures of Huckleberry Finn: everyone should read it.

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RECLINE
T.J. Tucker

Winter White

by Sarah Faulkner

Winter and winking
the speckled sky sweeps down
to earth
On wings of white, wings of
sifting, drifting silver.
Shimmering down and
Piling up
Pristine and pure,
Praying to be pillaged -
played in -
man and angel side by side
in shades of moonlight blue
and grey.

Big Brother Is Watching

2nd Place

by Amy Cowan

America. One nation, under God with liberty and justice for all. A land founded with the promise of freedom. A country in which traditional morals and values were cemented into its foundation. A place where men fought for the right to free speech. However, the once-solid guarantee of freedom of speech is being threatened. A movement promoting political correctness is infiltrating universities and public arenas throughout the country. Sometimes referred to as the "new McCarthyism" or the "new fundamentalism," the politically correct (PC) is directing a frightening attack toward the American people. The PC proposes that most people are oppressed, and it focuses on the fight to free victimized individuals and groups from this oppression. Anyone discriminated against, intentionally or unintentionally, is granted victim status. Discrimination may appear in the true definition of the word or it may be imagined or misinterpreted. Regardless of the origin of the discrimination, the PC views it seriously. Consequently, anyone can be a victim, which leads people to examine everyone else's behavior but their own. The PC movement is striving to release people from their oppression. However, PC supporters, in their attempt to free the oppressed, are actually creating a different, more easily recognized form of oppression.

Political correctness originated in the early part of the century. It was a term used by Marxists to identify material that was in agreement with their views. Eventually, the term disappeared. In the 1980s, it re-emerged in connection with the activities of various groups such as homosexuals, environmentalists and feminists. Today, political correctness is spreading rapidly throughout college campuses. The PC employs its members in watchdog groups known as the PC Police or the Thought Police. These organizations both secretly and openly monitor words and behaviors on campus. Anyone found to be in violation of the rules of what is considered to be politically correct can be persecuted by the PC. Punishments for deviant behavior include attending sensitivity courses and public repentance. For example, a University of Michigan student was overheard telling a joke about homosexuals. As a result, he was forced by the PC Police on campus to attend homosexuality sensitivity classes and to write an article for

the paper signed "Learned My Lesson" (Taylor 102). In this case, the PC determined what was proper and fitting for the student to say, rather than leaving that decision up to the student himself.

The PC believe that "Western culture and American society are thoroughly and hopelessly racist, sexist and oppressive" (Taylor 100). They propose that anyone disagreeing with their agenda is a victim of "false consciousness." In other words, the United States as a whole consists of oppressed individuals. Those who recognize this oppression are enlightened. Those who deny the oppression or oppose the views of the PC are merely oblivious to their plight. The PC does not allow any room for opponents to their purpose. If a person were to propose that political correctness was a gross exaggeration on the part of the supporters, he would be labeled falsely conscious. Although the PC promotes heightened awareness and sensitivity toward groups fighting for equality, its radical activism is causing problems for those valuing individual rights and freedoms.

For example, Professor Stephen Thernstrom, Harvard University, has been the target of PC attacks. In his undergraduate course on the history of race relations in the U.S., Thernstrom "used the word 'Indians' instead of 'Native Americans'" (Taylor 100), the politically correct term. He stated in class that the word "Indian" is used by Indians themselves. Nevertheless, he was bombarded with accusations that he was a racist. The onslaught reached the point where Thernstrom was forced to discontinue offering the course.

The sole purpose of education is to offer as much information as possible so that students may use the knowledge to reach their own conclusions. Yet, with the growth of the PC movement, educators are being forced to remove some vital information from their lectures for fear of being considered politically incorrect. This is not going to enlighten people to the point of recognizing their oppression. It is going to promote more oppression by creating an atmosphere in which people are afraid to express themselves in a politically incorrect manner. PC is essentially establishing the idea that traditional thinking is oppressive.

Not only is political correctness affecting the educational process, it is hindering the continuance of traditional morals and values. The family, a cornerstone of our culture, is under attack by enlightened feminists. The family is looked upon as a source of the oppression of women. Politically correct females view women that are married and raise families as victims of false consciousness. Those women married with children are continuing to enforce the role of males as the dominant gender. Alison Jagger, a professor at the University of Cincinnati and a politically correct feminist,

"would like to abolish the family altogether and create a society where, with the aid of technology, 'one women could inseminate another...men...could lactate and fertilized ova could be transferred into women's or even men's bodies'" (Taylor 38). It is this sort of extreme deviation from moral values that is gaining popularity in the PC movement.

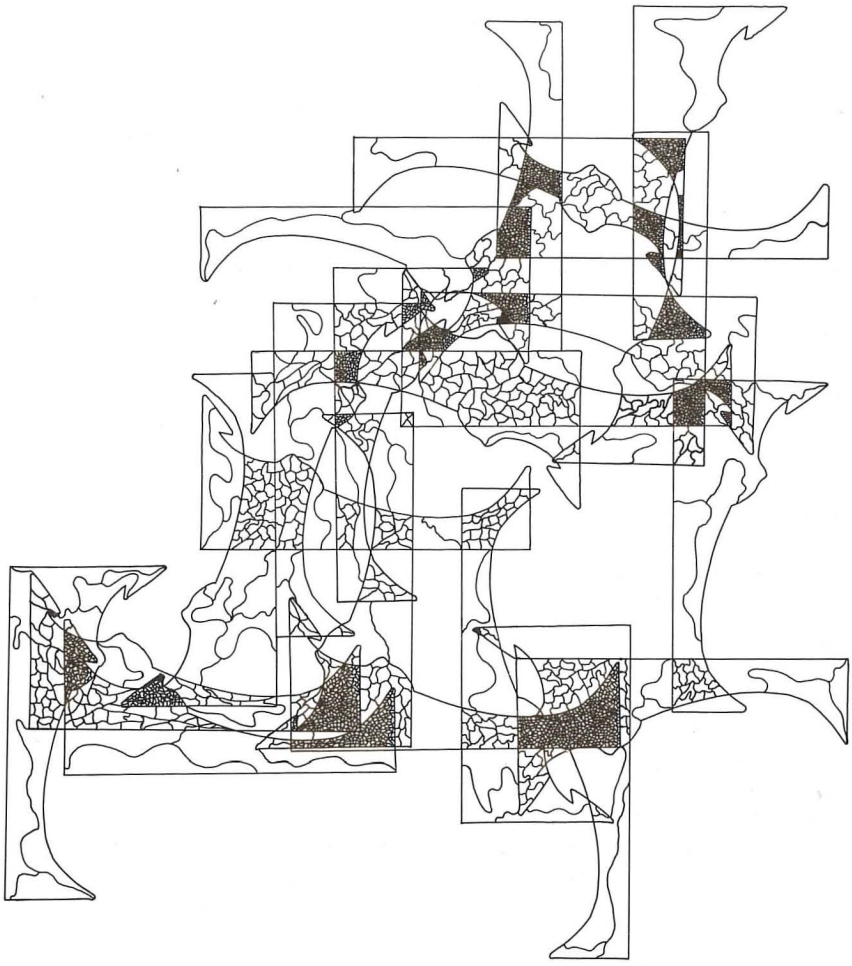
Eventually, PC groups wish to abolish the dominance of white males within society. Without their authority, white males would no longer be able to oppress the people as they do now. In every society, there exists some type of chain of command; someone possesses the power. Without a system of government, a society would erupt into chaos. Thus, removing males from positions of authority would not create equality for the victimized masses. It would leave the problem of redistributing the power. The most likely recipients would be those who removed the power from the white males. This is happening to an extent now with the uprise of the PC movement. If allowed to continue and grow, the PC may take the role of primary oppressor.

Political correctness goes even further beyond the realms of education and gender disputes. It attacks common, everyday terminology. According to the PC norms, domesticated animals should no longer be referred to as "pets," they are to be called "animals companions." The term "pet" may be offensive to some and may even offend the animals themselves. Young females are not to be called "girls," they are "pre-women." The word "women" should actually be spelled "womyn" because the traditional spelling acknowledges the dominance of men over women. "People of color" replaces "colored people;" "differently abled" replaces "disabled" and so on (Adler 50-52). Each correct term becomes more and more ridiculous as the list goes on.

The PC movement strangely echoes an unusual science fiction theme. George Orwell's novel 1984 offered a frightening picture of the world controlled by "Big Brother." Big Brother possessed an omnipresent quality. The people were closely monitored and even the slightest deviations from Big Brother's rules did not go unnoticed. Perhaps one might say that Orwell was not far from the truth; 1984 was not merely science fiction at its best. "Be careful what you say and do because the PC Police may be watching."

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_ _ _."Are You Politically Correct?" New York 21 Jan 1991



WINDOW
Larry Callebs

The Silken Tent

by Robert Frost

She is as in a field a silken tent
At midday when a sunny summer breeze
Has dried the dew and all its ropes relent,
So that in guys it gently sways at ease,
And its supporting central cedar pole,
That is its pinnacle to heavenward
And signifies the sureness of the soul,
Seems to owe naught to any single cord,
But strictly held by none, is loosely bound
By countless silken ties of love and thought
To everything on earth the compass round,
And only by one's going slightly taut
In the capriciousness of summer air
Is of the slightest bondage made aware.

Dismantling "The Silken Tent"

by Robert Van Putten

"The Silken Tent" is the title of an English sonnet written by Robert Frost in 1942. Beautifully lyrical and immediately visual, the poem is possibly a symbolic rendering of Frost's wife, with the silken tent being a simile for her. Whoever she is, it is obvious that Frost has a great deal of love and respect for her. The carefully chosen diction borders on formal in places and suggests a tremendous admiration for her.

"She is as in a field a silken tent". Line one immediately produces a visualization of that tent standing in an open field. The sun shines brightly in a clear blue sky producing strobes of reflection and shimmering waves of gold and silver from the delicate fabric of the tent. As the slightest of breezes curls about the tent like a cat about a leg, the entire picture becomes complete. It is a beautiful tent standing in solitude on the apron of grasses, flowers, and dry brown weeds covering the earth. Unthreatened by the azure sky, the tent glides through the dance it shares with the wind, passing time. The vision has a very romantic aura about it that suggests that the poem is indeed about a woman.

In lines 2-4, Frost gives the tent a bit of history, hinting that perhaps it has been around awhile. There are strings attached to the tent that are clearly the bonds one forms in life. And while no longer restricting, the dew of her youth having dried, these ties retain much of their former purpose and meaning. Just as the bonds between mother and child, wife and husband,

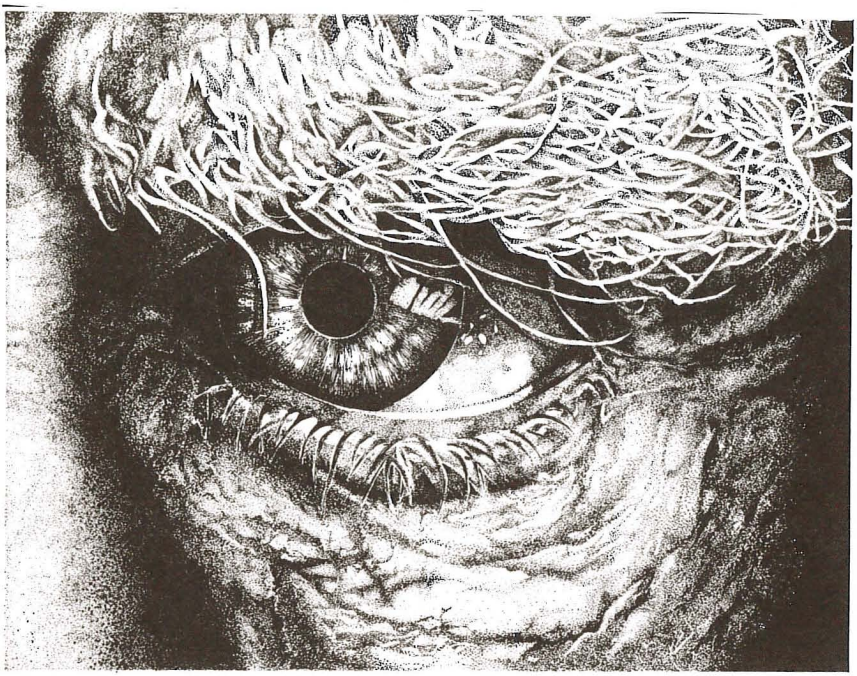
woman and friends, or female and mother nature, the soft cords are a bond that provides strength, purpose, and symmetry to the silken shelter. These three lines provide a picture of the woman at ease in her life, having withstood the rigors and demands of her youth and middle ages. She is content and happy, free to live freely, and a smiling portrait of satisfaction indulging in pleasurable pursuits paid for with a life of work and demands.

In lines 5-8, Frost gives her an air of strength to accompany and provide for her ease. The cedar mast that can bend and not break is the core of her existence. Frost's words make clear the virtue, strength, and propriety of this woman-tent. She is a soft and lovely silk on the outside, but her inner framework is firm. He is sure she is bound for heaven, not for any particular reason of goodness, but because the sum total of her existence is a trove of goodness.

The next three lines place the tent in a gyrating, cyclic motion that touches all points of her reach and in the midst of a full life. She is a part of everything good, and everything good is a part of her. There is a very spiritual feeling at this point in the poem. Frost wants to show her as a vital part of the continuity of life on a higher level. There is an ebb and flow to her life - a taking and giving of love and thought that has provided the means of assuring that the progression of her individual life as well as the lives of those she touches will continue in goodness and beauty. Her own beauty begat that which is returned to her by those who are products of her influence. Bliss forms a circle about her. The imagery of lines 9-11 is of a garden abounding with the fruits of her patient labors promising to provide the seeds for coming seasons while giving something to savor in the present.

The final three lines give a sense of her importance to those bound to her. There is the feeling created that, though she has passed the stage of her life where the demands on her are constant and unavoidable, there are often times when she is still needed. She has become a valuable resource rather than a primary source. The capricious nature of life will now and then provide a need for her and thereby reinforce the bonds between herself and her "cords". The bondage that Frost writes of is not the repression of her younger years. It is an enviable bondage. It is her net worth as a human being. When there is trouble for one within her sphere, she is there. She is needed. It is almost as if the roles of the tent and the ropes are reversed. There is an impression that her strength holds the ropes up from the ground rather than they keeping her upright.

There is clearly a great measure of love in Frost for this woman, whoever she may be. He provides a most sincerely respectful vision and feeling for her in the reader. His words make her seem above reproach and almost saintly. If she <u>is</u> Mrs. Frost, then Frost has been doubly blessed with her presence and his talent.



LUMPY EYEBALL
Deanne Kusiak

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For further information on Friends of the Arts, contact Patrick Bourke, Dean of Arts, Letters and Sciences, SCCCC, 323 Erie Street, P.O. Box 5015, Port Huron, Michigan 48061-5015.

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